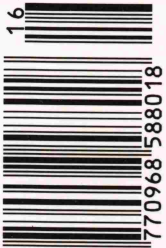


WINGS OF HONNEAMISE • MANGA AS ART • GREY AND GOLD

# ANIME UK

MAGAZINE

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U.S.

PIONEERING ANIME:

# MOLDDIVER



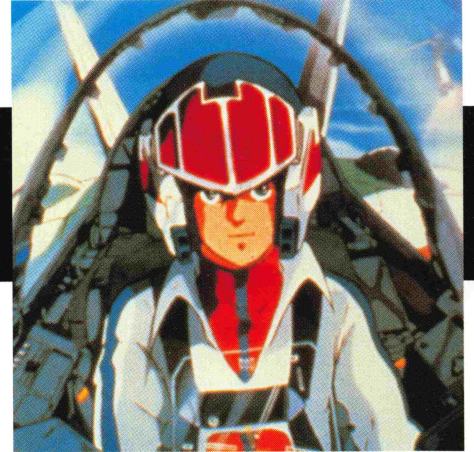


PRESENTS

# THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

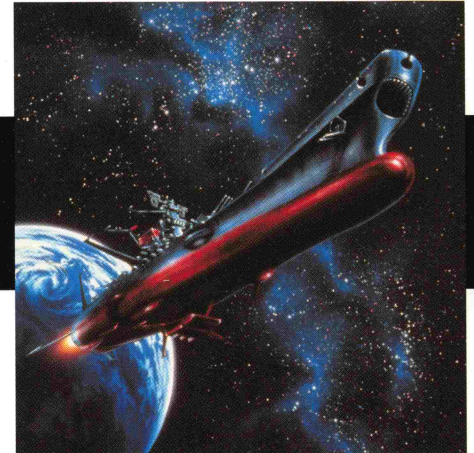
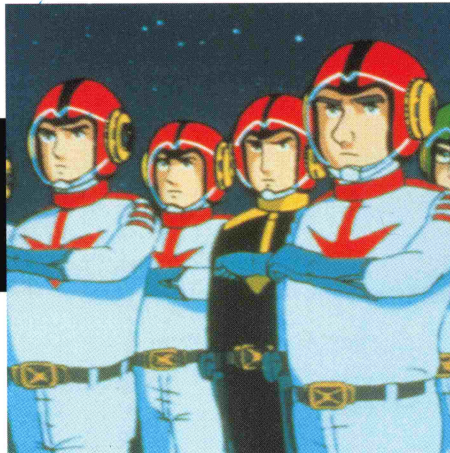
## ROBOTECH

THE MACROSS SAGA  
PART 2



## STAR BLAZERS

SPACE BATTLESHIP  
YAMOTO  
PART 2



## UROTSUKIDŌJIM

The Return of the Overfiend

FULL LENGHT FEATURE  
FILM - SUBTITLED  
AVAILABLE NOVEMBER



KISEKI CLUB, 5 MORRIS CLOSE, PARK FARM, WELLIQBOROUGH, NORTHANTS NN8 6XF

# ANIME UK MAGAZINE

FRONT COVER: MOLDIVER  
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## VOL 3 • NO 5

### HELEN McCARTHY Editor

Helen is afraid if the world saw what she really looked like, she'd have to become a film star.



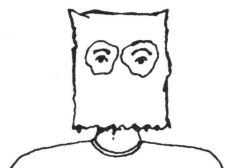
### JOHN SPENCER Designer

John has been told he couldn't fight his way out of a paper bag. Looks like they're right.



### STEVE KYTE Staff Artist

Steve is wearing the very latest in virtual reality cyber suit technology (he's piloting a Gundam)



### PETER GOLL Publisher

Peter doesn't care what he looks like - this model has a fitted bar and the drinks are free



### NOT COMPLETELY GONE AND CERTAINLY NOT FORGOTTEN:

Jane Moir has started her degree course and so has become a part-time member of TEAM AUK. Lynn Moir has also started a degree course this year but she too is staying on as a part-time team member. Good luck with the studying!

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Spongley's column will be back after this word from our sponsors: Buy the \*\*\*\*ing magazine you rotter!

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### KONNICHIIWA!

Sad news starts off this issue with CRUSADER VIDEO in difficulties. James O'Shea and his team made a big impression in a short time with their friendly, open attitudes and we wish them luck.

Happier news follows - see our NEWSLINE page for more details of ANIME UK's expansion plans, hinted at in my last editorial and kicking off with a bigger page-count next issue. Meanwhile this issue is packed with good things, including a wonderful feature article on WINGS OF HONNEAMISE by Carl Gustav Horn. Carl is one of the leading authorities on this classic film and we are privileged to present his work here in ANIME UK; in fact, his article was planned as our cover feature this issue. Sadly, we have been unable to give it the presentation it deserves, or place it on the cover, because UK rights holders MANGA ENTERTAINMENT LIMITED have refused to supply us with any transparencies (or indeed any material at all) in the future. This regrettable decision will limit our ability to run features on their releases but we will continue to cover the MANGA VIDEO catalogue to the best of our ability.

The PIONEER LDCE premiere release of MOLDIVER is a more than spectacular substitute cover feature, and to celebrate the label's UK launch we have a stunning set of postcards, our gift to you courtesy of PIONEER. Way back in issue 11 of ANIME UK almost a year ago, we featured their other premiere release TENCHIMUYO! RYO OH KI, and ever since then British fans have been eagerly awaiting the announcement of their first UK release dates. Following the recent trend towards brighter, zappier, less demonridden anime which has begun to create a wider UK market, MOLDIVER and TENCHIMUYO! are indicators of an exciting new direction in the British anime industry and deserve big success.

So, some happy news and some sadness; changes to come, but the continuing assurance that all of us on TEAM AUK remain committed to bringing you, our readers, the best magazine we can produce. Issue 17 will be out as usual in December; the New Year promises to be an exciting time for all of us.

Yours animatedly,

Helen McCarthy  
Editor

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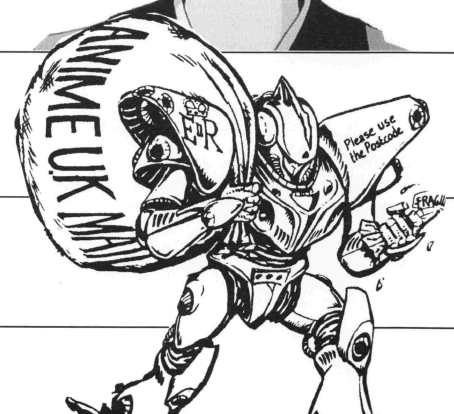
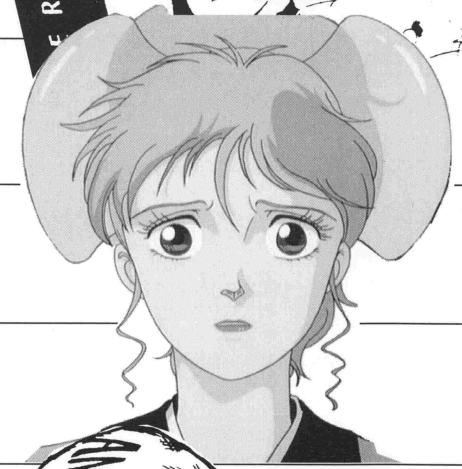
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# NEWSLINE

## ANIME UK HASSHIN\*! STAGE 1

Bigger, better, and more often - that's our plan for the future starting with our next issue. ANIME UK #17 will have more pages to give you even more of everything anime and manga related from all over the world. SAKURA STUDIO leads off AUK #17 with a major piece on TAIHO! SHICHAUZO! (You're Under Arrest!), the cops'n'cute hit from AAAH! MEGAMISAMA creator FUJISHIMA KOSUKE, not scheduled for UK release till next year. Look out for the "transformed" ANIME UK in December and get ready for more in 1995!

(Subscribers please note : your subscription is not affected and of course you'll continue to get your magazine as before.)

\*onward!

## CINEMA NIGHTS

MANGA ENTERTAINMENT has an expanded range of titles of limited cinema screening this winter. New on the circuit are the classic film THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE (see Carl Horn's two-part feature starting this issue), LUPIN III : CAGLIOSTRO CASTLE and the PATLABOR movie. The OAV version of Masamune Shirow's manga epic APPLESEED will also be featured. Check your local cinema!

## ON THE BOX

Anime features on TV again with a LITTLE PICTURE SHOW segment focussing on the PIONEER launch releases on 10th October. EMPIRE reviewer Kim Newman and our distinguished editor are among the pundits questioned.

## SUBSCRIBER DRAW RESULTS

The beautiful GENESIS SURVIVOR GAIARTH cel kindly donated by Robert Woodhead of AnimEigo for our draw has gone to JAY FELTON of London. Other winners are : Kellie Foss, Essex; Kay Sue Pat Fong, London; Steve Bell, Dorset; Dominic Heffer, Surrey; Matthew Bishop, Holland; Shokat Ali, Yorkshire; Ian McFarlane, Scotland; Glenn Jackson, Essex; Denzil J. Brown, Berkshire.

## A BIGGER WAVE

French-speaking readers : TONKAM's zine TSUNAMI is broadening its anime and manga brief to include Japanese rock music, games

and much more. The latest issue has a "fusion" cover pairing Fujishima Kosuke's Belldandy with Yoshiki of hot Tokyo band X. The first "manga francais", GODSEND, features in fifty pages of great reading for just Ffr17 (about £2.50 at current rates of exchange). write to TSUNAMI, 1 rue Eugene Varlin, 93170 Bagnolet, France, for mail order details.



## HARD BOILED DRAW RESULTS

Congratulations to William Armstrong of Birmingham, Ming Hung Wu of Essex and Russell Elder of Scotland who have won t-shirts, caps and videos in our HARD BOILED draw.

## FALLING LEAVES AND SPOOLING TAPE - CONVENTIONS AND EVENTS THIS MONTH

Get in touch right away with the organisers of these events, which all take place in October:

**DconTanimeTed**, 14-16 October, Grand Hotel, Birmingham : 48 hours of animayhem from the team that brought you two previ-

ous Birmingham cons. Phone Denzil Brown on 0635 872941 or Louis Sharman on 0295 256284, evenings up to 13th October, for information.

**Animated Film Festival** at the Everyman Cinema, Hampstead, from 16-20 October; a full day of anime on Tuesday 18 October and other animation too. Contact the Box Office on 071 435 1525

Meanwhile in Belgium, **F.A.C.T.S. III** takes place on Sunday 23rd October in Centrum Ten Berg, Halve Maanstraat 94, 9040 St. Amandsberg, near Ghent. Five hours of anime screenings and a fun day is promised. For full details contact Emmanuel Van Melkebeke, Code XYZ, Parkplein 5, B-9000 Ghent, Belgium.

## WILD TALES

Issue 5 of Britain's only anime fiction fanzine TALES FROM THE CAJUN SUSHI BAR is out any day now; if you miss getting your copy at DConTanimeTed, send an ssae to CAJUN SUSHI BAR, 21 Wadham House, College Close, Edmonton, London N18 2XT, UK - only £2.50 including postage.

## TINSEL FLASH

ANIMENIA editor Josh Clark announces the launch of GAI-JIN PRESS. Unashamedly modelled on Antarctic Press, America's home-grown manga label, the new imprint's first publication will be TINSEL CITY. Details from GAI-JIN PRESS, 2 Birkdale Drive, Immingham, Grimsby, S. Humberside DN40 2LB

## CRUSADER DOWN

CRUSADER VIDEO is in trouble despite the success of its first release CATGIRL NUKU-NUKU.

Cashflow problems, the bugbear of any young business, are hampering James O'Shea and his team - in their heroic effort to broaden the market. It may be some consolation to know that it seems to have worked ... with PIONEER's launch and a number of other labels bringing out "softer" anime, NUKU-NUKU may have started a welcome trend.





## SAKURA STUDIO EXCLUSIVE EVENT REPORT MAMONO HUNTER YOHKO 5

This article is © 1994 Hitoshi Doi and Peter Evans/Sakura Studio and may not be copied in whole or in part by any means without the permission of the authors.

Main text : Hitoshi Doi and Peter Evans. Photography and editing : Peter Evans. We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Toho Video in the production of this report, particularly Mr. Shibahara and Mr. Hattori.

On June 19 1994 the MAMONO HUNTER YOHKO 5 event took place at the Chiyoda Koukaidou in Kudanshita, Central Tokyo, in a large auditorium on the roof that seats around 900 people. In order to give you readers a change of style, Peter Evans volunteered his translator for the day, Hitoshi Doi, to write this report, and they would both be interested to know what you all think!

*Hitoshi writes :*

As ANIME UK's reporter I only went to the 16.30 session, a true otaku would have gone to both (13.30 and 16.30 sessions). Many did! Toho Video were kind enough to let us in, despite the short notice. The order for the day was a short talk by the staff and guests, followed by the Tokyo premiere of MAMONO HUNTER YOHKO 5. Then, after a brief intermission, the Hisakawa Aya and Yoshida Konami Final Concert.

The guests were Mutsuki Juuzou (writer), Miyao Takashi (chara designer), Yoshida Konami (Azusa) and Hisakawa Aya (Yohko). They lined up on stage and said a brief welcoming message. Mutsuki-sensei thanked everyone for coming to the event, despite the atrocious weather. Miyao-san thanked all the fans for sticking with YOHKO for the five years since it began. Yoshida-san hoped everyone would have a great time even though it was raining heavily outside. Everyone knew Hisakawa Aya, when she called "Hello everyone!" they all yelled "Hello!" back. The emcee, Mr. Hattori (producer) of Toho, then asked them all some questions.

**HATTORI** *There were claims that part 1 was too ecchi! by the girls, then that part 2 wasn't ecchi enough by the boys! Which did you prefer?*

**MUTSUKI-SENSEI** Personally, I like ecchi, it has its good points, but No. 5 is not so ecchi. But the transformation scene (in which all Yohko's clothes vanish) occurs three times.

*Please tell us about the youma? Tokima*

He is a very powerful youma that can manipulate time. He has 107 wounds on his body, one from each mamono hunter, as he has fought all the previous ones. Whenever he is about to lose, he escapes into some other time. Yohko is the 108th mamono hunter.

*You design unique characters, such as Yohko with her hair and Azusa with her ribbon. What are the key points when you design new characters?*

**MIYAO-SAN** I'm not trying for unique. I just want to make the first impressions count. I want to make it a design where you can tell exactly what kind of girl she is with just a glance. When I heard that the 107 mamono hunters would appear, I was worried that I would have to draw all of them. But with the help of all the staff it turned out well. There are red-heads, blondes, etc.

*The first mamono hunter Haruka and a 16-year-old Madoka (Yohko's grandmother) appear in this one?*

The first one is the same age as Yohko, but I made her more mature looking, as she was the first mamono hunter. The 16 year old Madoka was hard to do. I didn't think about what people in those days wore. I just drew a lively girl.

*For MAMONO HUNTER YOHKO you have done the anime, image clip, songs and such. What are your impressions?*

**YOSHIDA-SAN** At the previous event I did a cosplay<sup>3</sup> I remember that well. Even today there are girls who do cosplay. [There were two girls in the audience dressed up as Yohko and Azusa.] I'm happy when others dress up like this for us. When I first got the role of Azusa, they had the event right away

so I was very worried. They gave me a costume, a mini skirt. Although Azusa and Yohko are cute and would look good in a mini skirt, I was worried that I would not. In one scene where I was supposed to be sweeping up, I was holding a broom and wearing a pink ribbon.<sup>4</sup> Although I am 20 years old, my manager saw me and said that I look like a junior high student.<sup>5</sup> So I remember that.

*It's been about a year and a half since the MAMONO HUNTER YOHKO 2 event. Are you going to mess up (again) today?*

**HISAKAWA** I think it should be all right ...

*But in the first session you missed the lyrics.*

Since events are live, there are little accidents.

*Looking back over MAMONO HUNTER YOHKO?*

It has been a long five years. I have lots of memories ... too many. It also made me grow as a seiyuu.<sup>6</sup>

*You're also doing a duet?*

**YOSHIDA** Yes, the MAMONO HUNTER 5 CD will go on sale August 24th. There are drama and songs.

**HISAKAWA** Also the MAMONO HUNTER YOHKO 5 ED (ending theme) single will go on sale July 6th.

*Then Yoshida-san and Hisakawa-san started*

DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO © NCS/Toho Co. Ltd./ AD Vision  
Photographs of Hisakawa-san & Yoshida-san by  
and © Sakura Studio/H. Doi

*taking over and asked some questions.*

**YOSHIDA** How does it feel about doing YOHKO for five years?

**HATTORI** *It was great being surrounded by fantastic staff and cast. I think it turned out well. This was my first as a producer, so I have lots of memories.*

**YOSHIDA** I hear that there is going to be a Mook<sup>7</sup> coming out.

**MIYAO** It should be ready by the end of July. When the previous one came out last April, we just had to collect the pictures from the previous episodes. But for this one, they asked me to draw all new pictures. I told them that there wasn't anything left to draw! Luckily I got ideas from others, and was able to do it. There is a scene where Yohko and Azusa were doing an after recording session. Also there are many pictures of Yohko's daily life, so there aren't many scenes of her in the China dress. Also, Gakken (publishers) told me that I had to draw a shower scene, but it is not that ecchi.

**HISAKAWA** Mutsuki-san, what about SOTSUGYOU (Graduation)?

**YOSHIDA** Also YUUGEN KAISHA (Private Company)?

**MUTSUKI** Yes, they are both coming out from other places. In SOTSUGYOU, Hisakawasan is doing one of the voices.

*Then the guests said their final comments to*

*wrap up this part of the event, before the premiere and concert.*

**MUTSUKI** I'll say on behalf of the entire staff, thank you very much.

**MIYAO** I never thought YOHKO would last this long. I don't know what will happen in the future, but if YOHKO can come back it will be because of all of you. If that happens I would like to try something new. Thank you very much.

**YOSHIDA** You're going to watch YOHKO 5 now. It's raining all day today and it's turning into a storm. It's as though "Yohko calls that storm". Please enjoy it.

**HISAKAWA** This is the final YOHKO, and after that it will be the final concert. Since it is the end, anything goes. Please really enjoy it.

*(And, of course, they did!)*

<sup>1</sup> "ecchi" comes from the word "hentai" meaning perverted. Usually in the sense of overt displays of sexuality. "Chotto abunai ne?" (Little bit danger h'm?)

<sup>2</sup> Youma = demon, evil spirit. Every OAV should have one!

<sup>3</sup> Cosplay - costume play. Dress up as your idol.

<sup>4</sup> And other clothes, so stop drooling or your girlfriend may never speak to you again!

<sup>5</sup> Personally, I doubt that she ever left junior school, let alone junior high.

<sup>6</sup> Voice actress

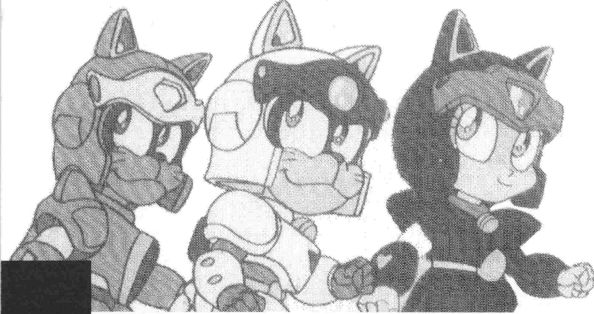
<sup>7</sup> Magazine/bOOK



# S

## CONTINUED

Kat Gang), a 49 episode TV series made by TATSUNOKO (see : TATSUNOKO) in 1990. Seen briefly in the UK on ITV's Saturday morning show MOTORMOUTH, the show has achieved cult status (well, sort of!) A paltry single 70 min video was briefly available from ENTERTAINMENT U.K.



### SCHODT, FREDERIK L.

American writer/translator/interpreter, perhaps best known for his seminal book "MANGA! MANGA! THE WORLD OF JAPANESE COMICS", pub. Kodansha, required reading for any new fan. A major force in promoting East/West relations through popular culture. Long may he continue. (See interview and bibliography in ANIME UK #15.)

### SD

Stands for SUPER DEFORMED. A generic prefix (e.g SD GUNDAM) for squashedup, 'cute' versions of characters or mecha. More manic in their parody than 'chan' (see : CHAN), SD charas tend to be just as deformed in personality as in physique. SD GUNDAM started the craze, and now no popular media character (not just in anime/manga!) is safe. Another variation is CB - CHILD BODIED, a version of CHIBI (little, small).

### SHERLOCK HOUND

Original shooting title for GREAT DETECTIVE HOLMES, a 1984 TV series based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's classic detective, but featuring an all canine cast. A Japanese/Italian co-production between TMS (TOKYO MOVIE SHINSHA) and RAI, it ran for 26 episodes, some of which have been released on video in the U.S. & U.K. A charming series full of warm, gentle humour and some excellent animation, it also benefits from the involvement of Hayao MIYAZAKI (see : MIYAZAKI), who worked on six episodes prior to leaving TMS in 1982. The Miyazaki episodes are : The Little Client; The Blue Ruby; Treasure under the Sea; Where did the Sovereigns Go?; The Abduction of Mrs. Hudson; The White Cliffs of Dover. TMS have readopted the SHERLOCK HOUND title for overseas sales.

### SHINTANI, KAORU

Manga artist/writer. Inspired as a child by the works of Osamu TEZUKA (see : TEZUKA), Shintani's ambition to work for his idol as an animator was foiled when Tezuka's MUSHI PRODUCTIONS (see : MUSHI) went bankrupt. However, he eventually became assistant to another anime/manga legend, Reiji MATSUMOTO (see : MATSUMOTO). Both share a passion for vehicles of all kinds, especially military aircraft, and both artists' accurately detailed renderings of these are in stark contrast to their willowy, cartoonish figure work.

Shintani went solo, age 26, eventually setting up his own studio DAI ('big') PRODUCTIONS on the second floor of his house. With his staff he produces over 170 pages of artwork a month! Best known in the West for his only translated title : AREA 88, a searing tale of mercenary air warfare. Both this and another of his manga, the exploits of the filthy rich adventuress CLEOPATRA D.C., have been animated. AREA 88 is available in the U.S. from U.S. MANGA CORPS.



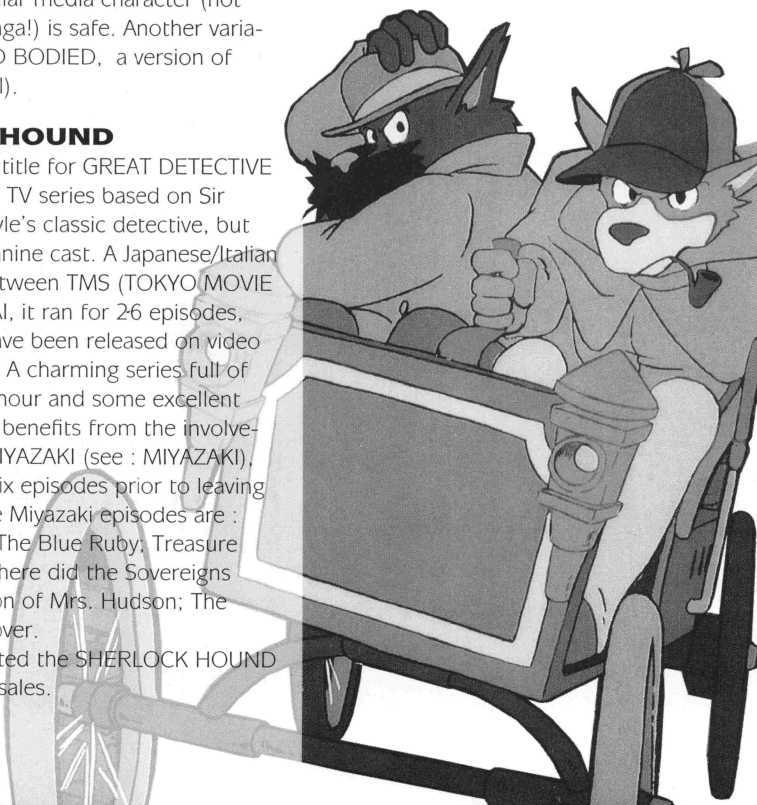
### SHIROW, MASAMUNE

Manga artist/writer. Pen name - real name unknown. Shirow's combination of cyberpunk technology, stunning action set-pieces, slapstick humour and cute, competent heroines have made him a fan favourite in Japan and the

West, via English translations from DARK HORSE COMICS and STUDIO PROTEUS (see name entries) and publication in other European languages. His first manga BLACK MAGIC, published in 1983 at the age of 21, would later 'inspire' the OVA BLACK MAGIC M(ARIO)-66. The massive masterwork APPLESEED begun in 1985, won him the prestigious Seiun Sho award for Best Comic Art at that year's national SF convention. It is currently at Book Four; between books he found time to create the lighter ecological police epic DOMINION. Both were animated, APPLESEED as a one-off OVA, DOMINION as two OVA series, the first a 'prequel' to the manga. Also available in translation : the manic, mystic manga ORION, the lavish art-book INTRON DEPOT and, soon, the sleek cyberstrip GHOST IN THE SHELL (KOKAKU KIDOTAI). Shirow's other projects include concept/design work for computer games, and NEURO HARD, a collection of articles and network outlining a created universe, which other writers and artists are invited to explore.

# A TO Z OF ANIME

By Steve Kyte





**THE ANIME UK MAGAZINE**  
*Fanzine of the Year*  
**AWARDS!**

There are a lot of them about; it's getting so you can't open the post without a pile of new anime and manga fanzines falling into your lap. A healthy fanzine culture is one of the signs of a strong and growing fandom, so it's good to see all that activity out there. Here at ANIME UK MAGAZINE we think this trend deserves recognition and encouragement.

The FANZINE OF THE YEAR AWARDS will reward fan editors, writers and artists for their labours of love. Anyone - editor, writer or reader - can nominate their own or any other favourites for an award in one of seven categories which should (we hope) cover most of the major areas of anime fanzine endeavour. They are :

- BEST FACTUAL ARTICLE BY A FANWRITER**
- BEST OPINION/EDITORIAL BY A FANWRITER OR EDITOR**
- BEST FICTION BY A FANWRITER**
- BEST COVER ARTWORK BY A FAN ARTIST**
- BEST INTERIOR ARTWORK BY A FAN ARTIST**
- BEST EUROPEAN LANGUAGE FANZINE**
- BEST ENGLISH LANGUAGE FANZINE**

Needless to say (I hope!) only anime & manga fanzines or zines with a heavy anime/manga content (at least 50%) are eligible.

*So how do you nominate someone's work for one of these categories? Just follow these simple rules :*

- 1) Get a copy of the fanzine. If you are nominating for FANZINE OF THE YEAR it will help us to assess the zine fairly if you send more than one issue.
- 2) On a separate piece of paper, write your name and address, the name of the editor and/or author (if known), the fanzine title and address, article or artwork title if applicable, the price and frequency of production.
- 3) Write a short letter explaining why you are nominating the zine, article or artwork in not more than 300 words.
- 4) Enclose these two pieces of paper with the zine/s and mail them to ANIME UK MAGAZINE, FANZINE OF THE YEAR AWARDS, 70 MORTIMER STREET, LONDON W1N 7DF, UK, to reach us NOT LATER THAN 31st DECEMBER 1994.
- 5) Zines cannot be returned unless you enclose a self-addressed envelope with enough stamps or IRCs to cover return postage.

The FANZINES OF THE YEAR 1994 and the other award winners will be announced in our February 1995 issue. All winners will receive a special prize and a certificate, and will be entitled to carry the words ANIME UK MAGAZINE FANZINE AWARDS 1994 - WINNER on their covers; the two FANZINES OF THE YEAR will be able to describe themselves as ANIME UK MAGAZINE FANZINE OF THE YEAR 1994.

*Don't miss this chance to recognise the best fan writers, artists and editors in Europe!*

# The Wings of Honneamise

by Carl Gustav Horn

... But today the Rock cries out to us: clearly, forcefully : Come, you may stand upon my back, and face your distant destiny. But seek no haven in my shadow. I will give you no hiding place down here. You, created only a little lower than the angels, have crouched too long in the bruising darkness; have lain too long face down in ignorance, your mouths spilling words armed for slaughter. The Rock cries out to us today: You may stand upon me, but do not hide your face ... Each of you, descendant of some passed-on traveller, has been paid for ... Lift up your faces. You have a piercing need for this bright morning dawning for you. History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but, if faced, with courage, need not be lived again. Lift up your eyes on this day breaking for you. Give birth again to the dream ... The horizon leans forward, offering you space to place new steps of change.

Maya Angelou, ON THE PULSE OF MORNING

HONNEAMISE NO TSUBASA

8



© GAINAX, DAICON Film

No film has better demonstrated the extraordinary artistic potential of anime than *THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE*. It is a triumph of medium, using animation to portray an imaginary world, meticulously detailed, exotic and compelling, yet at the same time functional and familiar as our own. It is also a triumph of narrative, with a strikingly original premise that director and screenwriter Hiroyuki Yamaga uses to tell an old but neglected story, the story of an individual's search for values, on a journey through a complex world, on the way from unfeeling complacency to making history. *THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE* stands out among anime because its creators, the people of GAINAX, stand out among the anime industry. The studio is best known for its series *NADIA : SECRET OF BLUE WATER* (*FUSHIGI NO UMI NO NADIA*), which was a burst of entertainment on a TV anime scene that has been in decline since the mid-1980s. GAINAX is also known for putting snap, crackle and pop into two of the

biggest anime clichés: alien invasion and the OAV industry, with the *GUNBUSTER* series, which is available subtitled from U.S. *RENDITIONS* in America and *KISEKI FILMS* in the U.K. Many anime fans in the English-speaking world will get to know them even better with ANIMEIGO's release of GAINAX's *OTAKU NO VIDEO*, two OAVs that form between them the most amazing document ever made about anime fans (out in the UK from ANIME PROJECTS). *OTAKU NO VIDEO* alternates between a live-action 'expose' of the follies and lusts that drive anime fans, complete with a stentorian narrator and pretentious pie charts that "tell the sad story", and an animated "documentary" of GAINAX itself, that explains how they rose from selling fanzines at school fairs to becoming one of the most powerful corporations on earth. The megalomaniacal satire of *OTAKU NO VIDEO* is a reflection of the tremendous drive and iconoclasm of GAINAX, whose real-life origins are to a large extent the story of the production history of their only feature film, *THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE*. And, as Claude Pelletier (*Publisher, PROTOCOLTURE ADDICTS*) has pointed out, the struggle of *HONNEAMISE*'s protagonists to set foot in a new world is allegorical to the struggles of GAINAX itself; a collection of fans who loved anime as much as they wished to see it break through its boundaries.

GAINAX filed for incorporation on December 24, 1984. Its name means 'something really big' in the Sanin dialect, and its founders claimed on their form that among GAINAX's lines of business were model manufacturing, publishing, advertising, travel agencies, and real estate. Their main line, though, was animation. GAINAX's chief personnel had all made their start in anime during the boom years of the late 1970s and early 1980s. It was a time for youth, and for youthful inspiration. Hiroyuki Yamaga, at 19, was working on the storyboards and continuity direction for Episode 9 ("Miss Macross") of the revolutionary TV series *SUPER DIMENSION FORTRESS MACROSS*. Yamaga was part of a group in their teens and twenties who were both fan and professional, staying up late watching anime and making anime in an exciting and rapidly evolving scene. He was also involved with making the short anime films that would open the biannual national Japanese sf convention, DAICON, whose co-chairman, Toshio Okada, would later become GAINAX's president and one of the chief planners behind *HONNEAMISE*. It was while working on *MACROSS* in October of 1982 that Yamaga met Hideaki Anno, who was to be one of *HONNEAMISE*'s key animators, and Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, who was to design its characters and much of the film's distinctive 'world'. *HONNEAMISE* was ultimately based on an original story by Yamaga, and it was in the summer of 1984 that he and his friends began to conceive the idea of making the story into an anime film. Their plan was to

make a short 'demonstration' film which would give the story in outline, and then use it to win the approval of a producer for the funding of a full-length feature film. In April of 1985, Toshio Okada presented the short, entitled *THE ROYAL SPACE FORCE*, to the board of BANDAI, a major Japanese corporation which wished to expand into film-making. Okada had seen this as GAINAX's great opportunity. *THE ROYAL SPACE FORCE* was four minutes long. It had no dialogue, but told its story with a series of short empathic scenes, edited together in rapid progression, and an audio track that began with radio excerpts from Yuri Gagarin's orbit of the earth and proceeded with the climax from Wagner's *MEISTERSINGER VON NURNBERG*. All this had been financed out of GAINAX's own pockets, but the short convinced BANDAI's president, Makoto Yamashina, to approve an eight-billion yen budget for a full-length motion picture. It was the largest budget ever for an anime film.

One month later, GAINAX had assembled a production staff of 3,000 animators to work on the project. *HONNEAMISE* was to be an anime film with a singular depth of research behind it, research gathered by the key staff of GAINAX who toured the United States in the summer of 1985 before film production began. The group immersed themselves in the history of aviation and spacecraft design at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., and became enamoured of the Post-Modernist school of architecture design during their studies in New York City. Finally, to get a visceral feel for their subject, they travelled to Cape Canaveral in Florida to witness the August 27, 1985 launch of the space shuttle *DISCOVERY*.

Upon their return to Japan in September of 1985, work upon the film began in earnest. What the crew had learned about design in the United States went into their storyboards and from there into animation. Yet the design was by no means confined to American influences. In a manner comparable to Peter Gabriel and Paul Simon's use of music from around the world to create new and compelling syntheses in composition, *HONNEAMISE*'s design crew made an "alien" setting which is a dazzling kaleidoscope, whose bright turning shards are fragments mirroring our own world. In a trolley-ticket machine there is an echo of a Japanese rail station, in a wall poster there are graphics reminiscent of Navajo paintings, in a ceremonial hat is found Maori design, and in a newsreel is seen the BBC of decades past. This unprecedented complexity surpasses even the wildest creations of Terry Gilliam and Ridley Scott - and anime makes it all work, whereas it might not have in live action. Much has been said about animation's ability to create imaginary worlds. Disney, and even the spectacular *AKIRA*, gave us a fantastic spin on nature scenes, castles and skyscrapers, but *HONNEAMISE* truly delivers the promise with a level of detail and distinction



never seen before. The sampling of global cultures throughout history serves another of the film's goals : to draw at times a thin line between its world and our own. Terence's motto "I consider nothing that is human to be alien to me" could be the philosophy of HONNEAMISE's creators as well.

A similar type of creativity is to be found in Ryuichi Sakamoto's original soundtrack for HONNEAMISE. Sakamoto, who shared an Academy Award with David Byrne in 1987 for their soundtrack for THE LAST EMPEROR, was a pioneer in electronic music and digital sampling in the 1970s with his avant-garde Yellow Magic Orchestra, and developed a score for HONNEAMISE based around variations of four "prototype" themes that incorporated French melodies, Thai percussion and elements of American industrial music. The final result stands out among the synthetic pop common to anime soundtracks and is rivalled for distinction only by Shoji Yamashiro's work for AKIRA. The Japanese public first heard Sakamoto's soundtrack on one of the two theatrical trailers for HONNEAMISE. The other, in a subtle tribute, used not Sakamoto but music by Jean-Michel Jarre; specifically, his SECOND RENDEZVOUS, PART 2, which was composed for astronaut Dr. Ron McNair, who perished in the Challenger disaster. McNair had intended to perform the piece on saxophone during the flight, which would have been the first premiere of a work of music in space.

Set against this rich visual and aural backdrop is Hiroyuki Yamaga's direction and story, which shows a level of originality and ambition exceedingly rare in anime, or for that matter, motion pictures in general. It is the story of the first man in space, but to say that is a little like saying that MOBY-DICK is about a whale hunt. Toren Smith once compared HONNEAMISE to THE RIGHT STUFF, a comparison that may appear obvious at first, but this resemblance exists only because GAINAX researched the same historical films on manned space flight that the makers of the 1984 American film did. THE RIGHT STUFF is about the attitude of a special breed of American heroes - test pilots - and how that attitude interacted with the political and social currents and expectations that abounded in the two decades following the Second World War. THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE is more universal in approach, set in an imaginary world which contains all of the real issues people face: class, spirituality, war, the state, as well as more prosaic things like spoons and motorcycles; yet this setting is at the same time nonspecific to any particular place, so that an audience from almost any modern culture could relate to it. If anything, HONNEAMISE's protagonist, Shirozugh Lhadatto, could be said to have the wrong stuff. He dreamed of being a jet pilot, but didn't try particularly hard to become one : "My report card showed me it would be impossible." He lands in the Royal Space Force, a collection of men : young, and bored as himself; and old, engineers and

scientists, impotent dreamers who were abandoned by their own government as an embarrassment years ago. Adrift like many of his generation in real life (Hideaki Anno spoke at AnimeCon '91 of his Japanese contemporaries who are "just playing around ... doing nothing with their lives, working at jobs they dislike") Shiro will embark upon a classic journey; an encounter with a stranger leads to a decision to make a radical change from routine, starting him on a road through the realities of the world, which he will have to challenge and understand as never before on the way to revelation and enlightenment. HONNEAMISE is a story about growth; not only the question of the individual's, but humanity's. These twin themes are united in an explicit, visual manner in the film's final minutes, but they are developed throughout the length of HONNEAMISE. As Shiro takes on more responsibilities and has expectations piled upon him, he shops for moral values from three people, important to him : his would-be lover Leiquinni, his best friend Matti and his commanding officer General Khaidenn, all of whom have very different views of life. He learns to check the answers of others against his own observations of the world. The film, which opens with the hero's statement of moral ambiguity, ends with his delivering a prayer on behalf of the human race. HONNEAMISE does not preach; it invites us instead to think about preaching and the value systems we own or are solicited to buy.

HONNEAMISE is a film that is always cognizant of history, and it addresses the question of humanity's growth through the issue of the first man in space. Arthur C. Clarke, in his book 1984: A CHOICE OF FUTURES, has pointed out that manned space travel - the fantastic first steps of the human race off our planet - was birthed in the 1960s by the political imperatives of the Cold War. The rockets that sent John Glenn and Yuri Gagarin into orbit have only two uses - to bring about a new era in human history, or to end it with nuclear weapons.

With the world finally beginning to crawl out from under that shadow, the questions HONNEAMISE raises become more pertinent now than they were when it was first released in 1987, when SDI was on the drawing boards and there was still a Soviet Union. Does space travel imply a new era, a new hope? Or is it as hostage to human nature as everything we have touched? This is one of the grander questions Hiroyuki Yamaga poses to us in THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE. But Yamaga is a big fan of human nature too, and the film is populated by people as vivacious as their surroundings. In the dazzling detail of HONNEAMISE's art, the film offers many things that will be caught only in repeat viewings. In the same fashion, everyone will enjoy HONNEAMISE in their own way, which is only appropriate; for, of all the film's 'messages', the most important one is that we cannot continue to deny that we have a choice - and a future.

## INCREDIBLY EXPENSIVE AND INVOLVED FILM SEEKS TITLE: PLEASE RESPOND SOONEST

One of the many unusual aspects of THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE was the contention over what the film's name would finally be. At a press conference in April of 1986, it was promoted as THE WINGS OF LEIQUINNI (reflecting, perhaps, an earlier emphasis on that character's spiritual concerns - see THE STORY OF ANOTHER HONNEAMISE elsewhere in this article) but the debate continued all throughout that year. At one time or another, at least 80 titles were under consideration. A partial list includes SPACE LOVE STORY, LITTLE SPACE HERO, GALAXY KINGDOM E.A.R.T.H., CRYSTAL TERRA, SPIRITS OF FIRE, COSMIC ARMY, NEO COSMO, WINGS OF STARS, STARDUST RIDER, KINGDOM 87, BLUE HISTORY SHIROZUGH, A WAY TO THE STARS, TOWARDS SPACE, TAO : THE WAY, FALL IN SPACE, ARCADIA, SONG OF ICARUS, SEVENTH GALAXY SYSTEM, EARTH CONTINUATION 1961, and many other gems. The final title, THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE (HONNEAMISE NO TSUBASA), seems to harken back to the earlier storyline concept ("The Story of Another Honneamise") in the same way that the film's trailers and publicity did. It does, however, suggest an additional meaning more appropriate to the actual film. Consider that "m" and "n" are sometimes interchangeable in Japanese pronunciation, and put together the french words "homme" (man) and "amis" (friends), and the title then evoks the comradeship between the members of the Royal Space Force that eventually gets them off the grounds. The Japanese are known for their strange uses of English in TV show title and advertising slogans; perhaps French gets this kind of treatment too.

### THE STORY OF ANOTHER HONNEAMISE

THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE is a film that takes careful consideration of the balance between materialism and spirituality, but, at one time, the film's scale was meant to have tipped deeply into the realms of the spiritual, an approach similar to that taken in the film version of NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF WIND. Here is an excerpt from the press release of a film that never was :

The miracle of love ... do you believe in this? This is the starting point of a far-reaching amazing romance. The "mysterious holy book" talked about from generation to generation that promises Honneamise eternal peace and prosperity ... A number of omens implying a final crisis brought about by the rapid advance of material civilisation ... The threat of invasion by the group of nations to the south ... The degenerate thinking that is taking place among the masses ... "When dark clouds entirely cover the forests, the earth, and the seas, then those who are 'awakened' through

the guidance of a lass with a pure and untainted soul, shall take wing and rise to Heaven, taking in hand the Honneamise holy book" ... all this is in the prophetic verse of the "Honneamise holy book". This "miracle of love" which occurs when their strengths are united as one would be the key alluded to in the holy book that would restore the Kingdom.

In a distant part of the universe ... by the shore of the huge Lake Serorianburuu, lies the Kingdom of Honneamise, with its population of 30 million. A beautiful natural setting, a futuristic city, flying craft that dance in the air, railway cars that run through the streets - all of this is filled with a strange charm completely unlike anything known on Earth. In the year Amemuga 3989, it was said that an enormous crisis would threaten the peace and prosperity of this Kingdom ... There was then a youth who loved the skies, who aimed to become a pilot, and who dreamed of flying faster than anyone. He was Shirotzugh Lhadatto, age 9. In the year Amemuga 3996, the older Shirotzugh joined the Royal Space Force, as did other youths as hot blooded and energetic as he. It was then that work began on a grand project to search space for the phantom holy book that promises eternal peace to Honneamise. It was also then that inauspicious signs began to appear which suggested the destruction of the Honneamise that had prided itself on its peace and prosperity. Prophets cried out that the Kingdom was covered by evil powers, and an unidentified epidemic broke out in the farming villages.

The theatrical posters for THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE proclaimed "A new generation ... the birth of a young bible" while the two different trailers for the film also echoed, for unknown reasons, some of the concepts of the 'other' HONNEAMISE; both trailers ending with the voice actress for Leiquinni, Mitsuki YAYOI, asking "The miracle of love ... do you believe in this?" a line that does not appear in the film. Indeed, although certain of the elements seen in the press release are retained in a more subtle fashion in the actual film, THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE is basically down-to-earth (in a manner of speaking) and concerns itself with spiritual issues as they relate to the historical record and daily life, rather than following the mystical path that the press release would suggest. It is reasonable to ask whether the film's poor performance at the Japanese box office might not in part be related to such unaccountably misleading publicity, which presented HONNEAMISE as a sort of romance/crusade.

(Special thanks to Dennis Owyang)

#### AUTHOR'S NOTE

Much of the information on the production of HONNEAMISE in this article was adapted from ANIMAG's excellent article on the film on pages 26-35 of issue 3, vol 1. This comprehensive piece by David Riddick, Robert Napton, Michael Ebert, Toren Smith and

Toshifumi Yoshida covers, among other things, the film's history, plot, ill-fated English dubbing, and even contains a short interview with Yamaga and Sadamoto. A must for those wishing to learn more about the film, the cover of issue 3 is by Sadamoto himself. Other information on HONNEAMISE can be gleaned from ANIME-ZINE's issue 2, pages 22-29, article by Toren Smith which recounts the plot and includes interesting comparisons of the so-called "translation" of HONNEAMISE by the producers of the English premiere version, Go East; the back cover is taken from one of Sadamoto's posters for the film. Issue 3 of ANIME-ZONE contains on page 32 a short article on Ryuyichi Sakamoto and his composition of the HONNEAMISE soundtrack. Both magazines can sometimes be found in direct-sales comic outlets; otherwise, enquiries may be directed to: ANIMAG, PO Box 23651, Oakland, CA 94623, USA, and ANIME-ZINE, PO Box 87, Rahway, NJ 07065, USA

#### PUBLICATIONS

For those interested in Japanese books on the film, the best overall is THIS IS ANIMATION #12 : HONNEAMISE NO TSUBASA (ISBN4-09-101515-8 C0374), at 1000 yen. It has 45 pages of color stills recounting the film, 30 pages of design sketches in an attractive blue tone, 16 pages of background paintings, with the remainder taken up by articles on the film in Japanese. Highly recommended. A book of the same size and price, the B-CLUB SPECIAL : HONNEAMISE NO TSUBASA : ORITSU UCHUGUN - COMPLETED FILE (ISBN4-89189-377X C0074), has a more cursory color front section (32 pages) but with larger stills. This section also contains character backgrounds and background and conceptual paintings. There are two additional color sections : a 15-page segment on the vehicles of the film, with technical specifications, plus coverage of the opening and closing segments, and a 15-page segment detailing the original four-minute pilot short and associated concept art. In addition to this, there are over 100 pages of design sketches and illustrated articles on the film.

For the collector is ANIMATE COLLECTION 07 : AILE DE HONNEAMISE (ISBN4943966-07-1 C0274), with a dramatic wraparound cover by Sadamoto, a 150page storyboard for the film accompanied by literally thousands of design sketches (reproduced at a small size) covering everything from snack food to space capsules, a 20-page color section of background and concept paintings, a chronology of the film and staff interviews, and a small foldout poster of the Space Force at the seashore. 1500 yen.

All of these books are well worth the money, and a good place to get them is the NIKAKU ANIMART, 615 N. 6th Street, CA 95112, USA, tel [408] 971-2822. (In Europe try SHEFFIELD SPACE CENTRE, 33 The Wicker, Sheffield S3 8HS, UK, tel [44 742] 758905.)

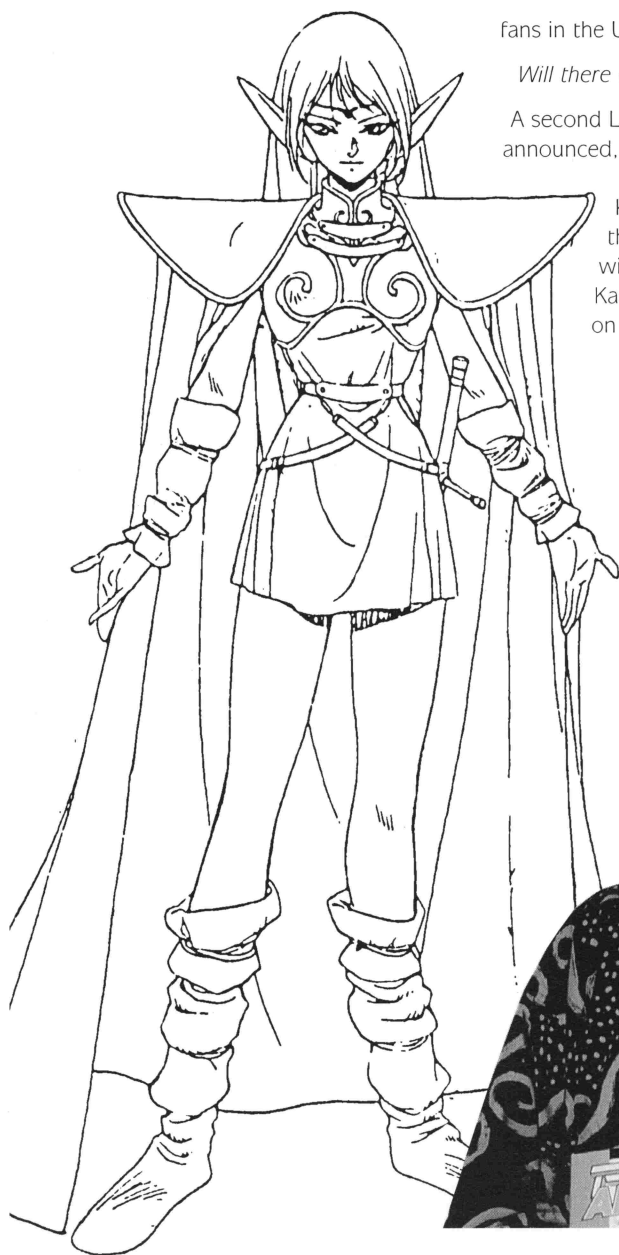
Send local stamps or IRCs for catalogues. You may expect to pay up to twice the current exchange rate (or more) for these books, but, unlike certain other importers, NIKAKU staff are friendly, helpful and speak English as well as Japanese. SSC staff are also friendly, helpful and professional.) In the summer of 1991 BANDAI released a "definitive" 2-disc LaserDisc set of THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE (BEAL-367). This contains the entire theatrical release, plus one minute added that was cut from the original print so that it could be transferred to a T-120 videotape for marketing. It also contains the four-minute promotional film ROYAL SPACE FORCE. Finally, it includes about eighty minutes of still shots of background paintings and design sketches for every aspect of the film. The audio portion of this segment contains the entire film music score, excepting one track, including pieces not available on the soundtrack albums. Its release price was 14,800 yen.



#### STAFF THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE

Executive Producer	Makoto YAMASHINA
Planning by	Toshio OKADA, Shigeru WATANABE
Produced by	Hirohiko SUEYOSHI, Hiroaki INOUE
Original Concept & Screenplay	Hiroyuki YAMAGA
Character Design	Yoshiyuki SADAMOTO
Key Animators	Hideaki ANNO, Fumio IIDA, Yuji MORIYAMA
Art Director	Hiomasa OGURA
Photography Director	Hiroshi ISAGAWA
Supervision	Iwa HACHIMAKI
Editor	Osabashi OGATA
Sound Effects	Atsumi TASHIRO
Efficacy	Mitsuru HAKUHARA
Sound Recording	Shohei HAYASHI
Music	Ryuichi SAKAMOTO
Directed by	Hiroyuki YAMAGA

The subtitled version on which this feature is based was produced by Sawyer Productions, based on an original translation of the film by Sue Shambaugh. The revised script was written by Carl Horn with additional dialogue by Toshifumi Yoshida. Title entry was done by Carl Horn; title editing, programming, and tape editing was done by Bruce Bailey. Videocassette recording systems, laserdisc player and Amiga 2000 provided by Bruce Bailey. GenLock provided by Mr. "K"; HONNEAMISE LaserDisc provided by James E. Christiansen; special thanks to Brian Fountain and Matt Anacleto for immoral support.



fans in the USA.

*Will there be any more LODOSS WAR?*

A second LODOSS OAV series was announced, but since as you may have heard the chairman of Kadokawa Films was arrested, there have been some holdups with this! (This is a reference to Kadokawa Haruki's arrest last year on drugs charges. Kadokawa Films

reaction to this one!)

In the past, Matsumoto Reiji was very popular, and all his women are very slim; so, for a time, that was the popular kind of woman in anime and manga. Now, in video, the target audience is a lot more clearly defined and maybe the characters are just fulfilling mens' inclinations! Maybe the staff who create these videos are having fun - for them, making the video was just an excuse!

# YUUKI

*(Gales of laughter)*

*Back to LODOSS WAR - why was there only one High Elf and one dwarf, but lots of Dark Elves and humans?*

In the LODOSS WAR saga there are many different stages that didn't really come out or develop fully in the OAV series. One such was the Forest of No Return, the gateway between the Elven and human worlds. If the charas go through that gate you'll see lots of Elves! In the original novels there are lots more Elves. In the LODOSS world there are many humans, while the population density of Elves and dwarves is relatively small; but in the original novels there are other parties than Pern's, and those have other Elves

are not currently proceeding with the LODOSS project.)

Chara designer, director and manga artist, Yuuki Nobuteru is a multi-talented individual whose career has embraced such icons as SUPER DIMENSION CENTURY ORGUSS, GUNNM (Battle Angel Alita in the UK) and RECORD OF LODOSS WAR. His Guest of Honour panel at ANIME EXPO was a freewheeling question-and-answer session, transcribed here by HELEN McCARTHY (who wishes to state here and now that all the more salacious questions came not from her but from JEFF OKAMOTO of ANIMAG!)

*When working on RECORD OF LODOSS WAR, how much character description were you given to help your designs? And are you familiar with the DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS concept?*

As for the LODOSS WAR part of the question, the story had been appearing in a magazine for a while and since Izubuchi Yukata (who illustrated LODOSS WAR for COMIC magazine) is a good friend I knew the story pretty well. On D & D, we get CNN NEWS in Japan and so I did know that it had many

*What sort of character design would you consider to be ideal, as a designer?*

Well, in anime, since the chara designer is one of the higher jobs, and as you move down the pyramid more and more people work on adapting his work then one ideal is to have very simple characters with less lines, so that anyone can draw them easily and quickly. Unfortunately this is the opposite of the characters I create! (Laughter.)

*What part of the body is most difficult to draw? (Much laughter)*

Well, I have had some cases of female animators coming up to me and saying "Oh, that chara has pretty big breasts!", and I might well agree that, OK, they are a bit big! (Even more laughter). Drawing womens' body lines is always very difficult.

*Q Why are characters with this kind of shape so popular now, in your opinion? We've moved from Matsumoto Reiji's very slim, willowy charas to GUNBUSTER's bouncy females. Why is this happening, and is it a good thing? (You can imagine the audience*



and dwarves.

*What are your favourite and least favourite charas to draw?*

It's very hard to pin down a single favourite chara - when I make charas I have to get right into their story so it changes depending on what I'm working on! But there are some times where, when the anime is in production, I think 'Oh s\*\*t this chara has too many lines, I shouldn't have designed it this way!'

as necessary. As for the future, there's a plan to make a film out of it, but it's still not definite - if the programme goes forward I will definitely be involved in it.

*Before the Kadokawa trouble, were there any plans for a new WEATHERING CONTINENT anime?*

I don't know!

*Any plans to animate your own comic VAEL-*

*What was your involvement in MEGAZONE 23 and MACROSS : DO YOU REMEMBER LOVE?*

For MEGAZONE 23 I was involved in parts 1 and 2 but not part 3, for the MACROSS movie I was still in ARTLAND and it was only one or two years since I got involved in anime. ARTLAND had a separate MACROSS group working on the project; I was sent in after we finished working on ORGUSS. There

# NOBUTERU

## THE ANIME EXPO INTERVIEW

*Did you have any principal guidelines for planning and for studio work on LODOSS WAR?*

When Izubuchi-san drew the pictures for COMIC magazine, they were a series of discrete drawings - the charas were not concrete. I took those drawings and used them to produce the charas required for animation. There were really no solid guidelines - Izubuchi-san and I discussed everything between ourselves at the production stage.

*Will there be any more GUNNM, continuing the story of Gally?*

There are currently no plans.

*Do you prefer working on SF to fantasy, or do you like both equally?*

I'm currently running a comic series in DRAGON magazine, primarily RPG stuff. I didn't have much experience in playing RPGs and I don't know much, so in drawing this comic I said "It's an RPG environment so I can create what I want to do" - which is closer to science fiction!

*(after Yuuki-sensei showed us the 'image sequence' for CLAMP's X2 a music video based on the X manga) When will X2 be released?*

As for the film, the trouble in Kadokawa means this is an unknown quantity. Possibly in one or two years!

*How much role did the band X play in your work.*

Well, the band had this song - X - out way before we made the video clip, so it was made to fit the song!

*What was your involvement in X2 and will there be a longer film of X2?*

This clip is very short and lots of characters appear for just a couple of seconds each, so it didn't involve a normal process of originating animation - the animators went straight to the original by CLAMP and I just supervised and checked the drawings, redrawing

*BER SAGA from DRAGON magazine?*

Well, if it were made into anime I'd have to draw some of the charas again and this would be rather tough!

*What's in the next VAELBER SAGA instalment?*

That's hard to say because I'm still drawing it! I brought the material with me and planned to do it 'on the road', but I can't find time.

*How would you feel about having VAELBER SAGA translated and flipped?*

The story is rather complicated, but if there is a person who can do it as an sf story it would be OK. As to the art being flipped, you'll be looking at the charas from the opposite side and the wrong angle and so mistakes become obvious - so in that sense, it's very hard.

were senior animators and designers like Anno Hideaki, Mikimoto Haruhiko and Hirano Toshihiro - it was a fabulous opportunity for me to work with these great animators and I'm sure that has affected my current work

*Will you be working on the BASTARD! movie?*

That's hard to answer since both X and BASTARD! were brought to me almost simultaneously. BASTARD! will be with Shueisha and X probably with Kadokawa. I don't mind which I do.

*Do you prefer anime or manga work?*

There's lots of frustration and stress in either case - when I'm on anime I say I'd rather work on comics, and vice versa!

*What is it like to be a freelance in Japan - what freedoms do you have, and what responsibilities?*

Since working freelance means that you're



free, if I don't work I can't eat but whether I want to work on a job is my choice. That's the freedom I get!

*I hear that every manga artist in Japan wants you to become the director and chara designer for their work when it's animated. How do you choose between so many simultaneous offers?*

In creating anime it's more of a group effort, not an individual thing so whichever group can offer the best facilities, in terms of the budget and staff to do a good job, would be my choice. There are times when I reject an offer and then I have to apologise to the original creators, but I would rather not work on a programme than work in a poor environment and produce a low-grade film.

*When you design a new chara, where do you start - with the eyes?*

In my case, the face is the most important characteristic, so obviously that's where I start. There are a few exceptions, like FIVE STAR STORIES, where the body shape and so on differ from the usual. In that case, I try and look at the total balance of the whole.

*Do you have different ways of creating charas for anime and manga, or do you use the same designs?*

In principle there is no difference, but for anime production many different people will draw the same chara so the final end product isn't always exactly as I want it. In comics, if I don't mind working harder I can put in any details I want.

*Where do you get your inspiration - from other artists, for instance?*

In some instances I will have an immediate idea, just thinking about the chara. When I have no ideas I take a walk, lie on the floor, look at videos and art books, until I get an idea.

*What are your art influences outside the anime and manga industry?*

I'm glad you've raised that. Outside influences are very important here. It's probably OK to get inspiration from other anime and comics, but borrowing ideas really isn't good. Other kinds of design - everything from flower arranging to movies, sculpture - are really helpful. Getting ideas from right outside the genre is good.

*Helen McCarthy talked to Yuuki-sensei after his Guest of Honour session*

*Why did you decide to become a chara designer?*

So I could make a living! But it's really a bit more complicated than that, so let me explain. In Japan the normal career progression in anime chara design is that you start as an inbetweener, then become a key animator, then a chara supervisor, then progress to being a chara designer. In my case, I was working part-time, in the evenings, on designs and animation after my regular job, and when I finally made this my career I immediately became an animator. I worked for ARTLAND on ORGUSS as my first job, and soon after I received an offer of work as a chara designer so I left ARTLAND. My first chara design work was on BIONIC SIX, an American-Japanese co-production by TMS, and I became a director almost simultaneously with becoming a chara designer.

*What would you have done if you hadn't been a chara designer and director?*

Well, I worked as a public servant for two and a half years after high school. So I'd probably still be doing that.

*Do you have any personal favourite anime or manga?*

Really, I'm a big fan of all manga - but there are thousands of titles published annually in Japan by a huge number of artists, so it's very hard to pick any favourites! But as a child I was very strongly influenced by the works of Tezuka-sensei, Matsumoto Reiji and Nagai Go.

*And do you have any favourite writers, either Japanese or Western?*

I really admire Philip K. Dick.

*If you could make any anime project that you chose, is there a "dream project" you'd really like to work on?*

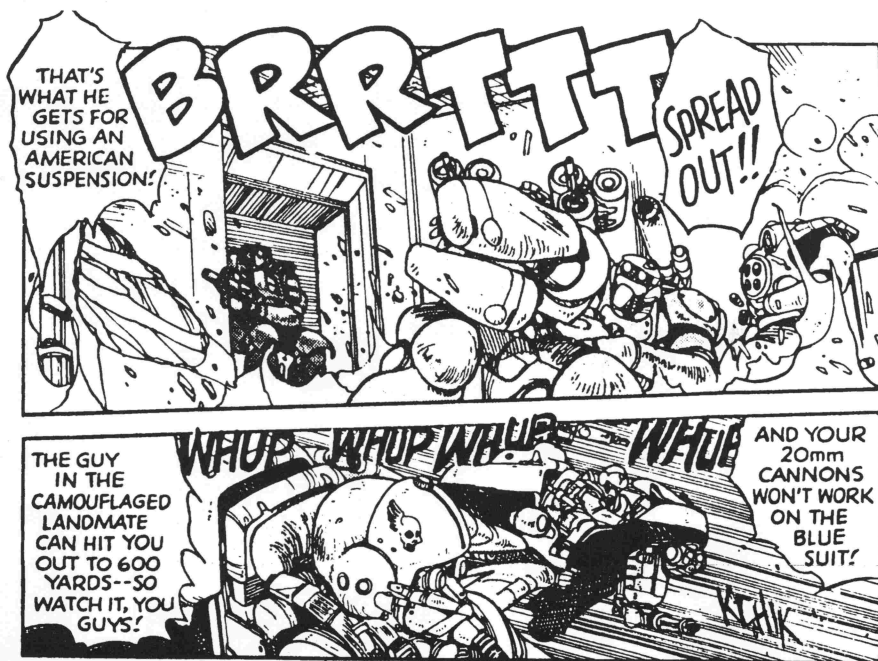
One of the great anime classics in Japan is UCHUU SENKAN YAMATO (Space Battleship Yamato) and I would like to work on remaking this with today's technology and talents. Tezuka Osamu actually received an offer to work on a remake of YAMATO but this did not come off; I'd really like to work on this!

There's also a shojo manga, THE CLAN OF PO HAYA MOTO, which I'd like to see animated and that would be enjoyable to work on.

*Yuuki-sensei, from all your British fans, thank you very much!*







In Japan it's disposable entertainment thrown out by the sackload after reading; yet it can display the highest technical and imaginative skills, and it's been displayed in art galleries and influenced artists round the world. Will it be recognised as a modern art movement in its own right?

Manga has been increasingly admired by Western fans of the comic form for its vigorous and innovative design and layout, and its appealing characters and novel storylines. Purely artistic criteria have played a secondary role in its acceptance. In fact, manga is much limited by the speed with which it is executed against demanding schedules, and the speed with which Tokyo commuters are reputed to read it, consuming a page every twenty seconds, completing and discarding a telephone-directory-sized book in the course of a journey. Such pressures do not encourage the creation of great graphic art.

There has been a certain amount of interest in comic art from the Western 'straight' art world, with at least one exhibition, such as the one I saw at the Edinburgh Festival Book Fair some years ago, touring the UK. Meanwhile in Japan, APPLESEED artist Masamune Shirow exhibited his work in a Tokyo art gallery. All the same, I was rather surprised to stumble on manga that, irrespective of whether one understands any of the text, stand out as having considerable artistic merit and displaying an attention to detail quite absent in most manga. Shirow's work (see pic) while full of inventive technical detail, seems more rooted in the comic book than in the art portfolio.

Displayed alongside this text are some

## MODERN JAPANESE GRAPHIC ART

# The Best of Manga

by Geoff Cowie

frames from Atsushi Kamijo's SEX Vol 1. (Let's quickly dispose of the idea that there is anything titillating in this book - there isn't, and the title seems to be essentially an attentiongrabber.) This large format series, printed on art-quality paper, chronicles the interactions of tall slim schoolgirl Kaho and various punks. These frames show Atsushi's remarkably detailed and vivid street scenes, and the attractive character drawings. And the chosen frames aren't frontispieces; there are over 190 pages like this in every volume! Many of the frames are full page size, with



little or no dialogue, and there are double-page mood pieces (2829, 48-49, 188-189). A few pages have a single colour added (red in vol. 1). This is seen to spectacular effect in the red flowers on pages 48-49.

SEX seen as a whole is startlingly good and is a complete revelation after the read-on-a-train stuff. It's so vivid and detailed that one can look through it for hours with renewed pleasure. Looking at work by Sukenobu, Eishi, Utamaro, Toyonuki etc in a book on traditional Japanese art I was struck by an echo of Atsushi's style; tall slim figures clad in loosely flowing clothes. Atsushi also created the TO-Y manga, about the lifestyle of a rock musician and his friends, but SEX is clearly a later and more accomplished work.

VIDEO GIRL AI by Mazukaru Katsura is available as a small-format manga series in 15 volumes. The art style in the first chapter is fairly dark, and contains many gradations of

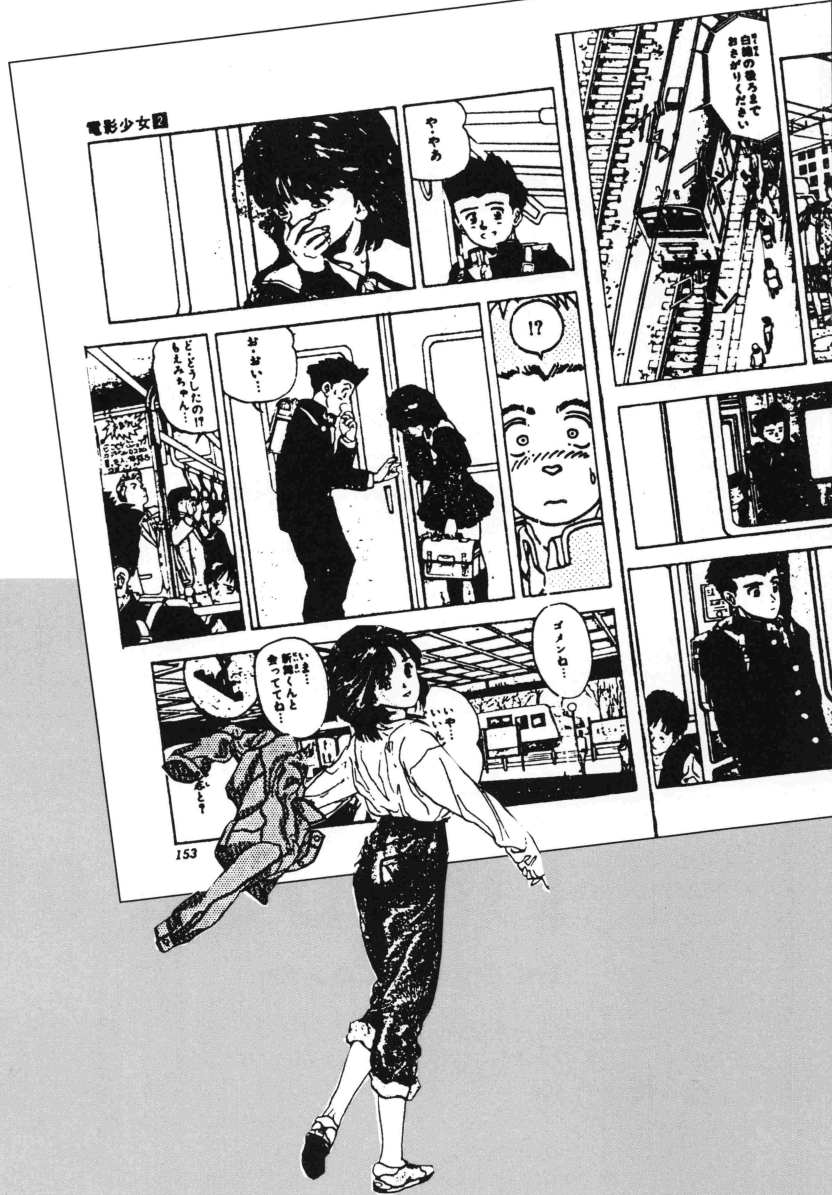
shading, which is fairly unusual in manga; in fact it is impossible to tell whether toner film was used or if the dot structure on the printed page is just an artefact of screen printing. In

later chapters the shading is clearly done, as in much manga, by the use of toner transfers, but the skill shown in producing gradations of tone remains high.

The art, already good at the outset, improves through vols. 1 and 2 till the figures of the girls become quite disturbingly life-like. One cannot believe, in fact, that the bodies and their clothing weren't drawn from life. And when the artist draws pantyies they are so detailed that they must have been modelled on real ones! This is a series for those who, like Japanese schoolboys, enjoy pictures of girls ...

One shouldn't get the wrong idea about this essentially wholesome series (one of the most sensitive depictions of adolescent angst that I've yet seen) but the dialogue has a typical Japanese earthiness at times, e.g. Ai (grabbing a shocked MOEMI from behind) [to YOUTA] "You like girls with big breasts, don't you?" The artist is clearly an obsessive who just loves to draw, as betrayed by the appendix drawings (see pic) which are excellent, but not connected to the story. Faces, as always, are stylised in typical manga fashion, but the posing of the figures and the way, for instance, that clothes hang on them is completely true to life. One may reflect here that depictions of elaborate clothing are ubiquitous in traditional prints.

I bought a copy of Toshi Kihara's YUME NO ISHIBUMI (Dream's Stone Monument) because the line art looked good, only to discover when I got it home that there was some breathtaking half-tone art at the chapter intervals (see pic). This manga seems to be a shojo (girls) samurai period drama, and all the costumes and settings, though informally drawn, are lifted directly from the world seen in traditional graphic art. It's not too surprising therefore that the featured illustra-



tion, despite its modern posing, is strongly reminiscent of lavishly costumed Edo period prints.

2001 NIGHTS (Space Fantasia R2001), by Yukinobo Hoshino, and still easy to find in the VIZ translation, has fine line drawings and some of the most realistic depictions of faces in manga.

TOKYO BABYLON, by the CLAMP co-operative, has very handsome black and red wrappers and (in vol. 1) a rather sumptuous multipart frontispiece in full colour. Colour frontispieces are quite common in manga that take one step upwards in production values from the basic pocket-sized volumes. In the serious upmarket manga of the TALES OF GENJI variety the frontispieces or colour covers can be quite stunning; in the style of Toshie Kihara's YUME NO ISHIBUMI pic, but in colour.

Inside TOKYO BABYLON #1, the best art is in the full-page and double-page frames, with a vertiginous steel-lattice tower (Tokyo Tawa, presumably) on p. 104 and a splendid emotion-and-flowers double page spread at pp 112-113.

Also worth a look is GO-KAIDO NO KIBA, no. 141 in the GEGIKA KING series. No. 141 has realistic and vigorously drawn characters, full of period detail, and no big round eyes at all. It's evidently a violent and brutal samurai saga. There are 280pp for ¥480 (£3); amazing value.

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**YUME NO ISHIBUMI**, Toshie Kihara, Big Comics 1984, ISBN 4-09-178501-8, ¥480

**TOKYO BABYLON**, CLAMP 1991, CLAMP/Shinshokan, ISBN 4-403-61250-4, ¥580

**VIDEO GIRL AI #2**, Masazaku Katsura, Jump Comics 1990, ISBN 4-08-871802X, ¥390

**GO-KAIDO NO KIBA**, Gegika King 1984, ¥480

**2001 NIGHTS No. 7**, Yukinobu Hoshino, Viz/Futabasha, 1991, ISBN 0-92927926-3, \$4.25

**JAPANESE GRAPHIC ART**, Lubor Hajek, Galley Press, 1976, ISBN 0-86136-015X

### PRINCIPAL JAPANESE BOOKSHOPS IN LONDON :

JAPAN CENTRE, 212 Piccadilly, London W1V 9LD

BOOKS NIPPON, 66-68 St. Paul's Churchyard, London EC4M 8AA

BOOKS ASAHIYA, Yaohan Plaza, 399 Edgware Road, Colindale, London NW9.

There is also a small but excellent secondhand bookshop on the corner of Grove Park and Edgware Road, opposite Yaohan Plaza.



Anything with art by Ryochi Ikegami (MAI, CRYING FREEMAN, SANCTUARY) is worth a look. When not in violent mode, his work typically features detailed, moody exteriors and pensive Oriental-featured characters.

The above manga can all be enjoyed without a knowledge of Japanese. Enjoying the art has little to do with being able to read the balloons, but if one can understand the story, this is naturally a bonus. The story-telling is generally sufficiently visual for one to get some idea of what is going on without being able to read the text.

It is also possible to view these books purely as art collections. Graphic skill in Japan has certainly not declined since the days of ukiyo-e prints, and the modern work is no doubt more appealing to untutored Western eyes. One can open one of these books and thumb through it, just enjoying the art and getting a feel of the storyline, and discover something new on each revisit. Those familiar with ukiyo-e can derive added interest from detecting the continuing influence on modern work.

Even if you can't read a syllable of hiragana, it's worth getting the Japanese collector's volumes to get art which isn't flipped or coloured, and is generally better printed, on superior quality paper that doesn't go yellow even after several years.



Japan's hardware experts Pioneer are just as renowned for video software in their native land, and now in the USA. Almost a year after AUK #11 announced the forthcoming release of TENCHIMUYO! RYO OH KI, the company announced its October release along with MOLDDIVER; follow-up plans

by the Western superhero comic market and increasing in numbers in anime fandom. MOLDDIVER - and TENCHIMUYO! too - have a lot to offer in terms of story interest, character development, bright, contemporary design and charm by the bucketload. More knowledgeable anime fans will enjoy the

## MOLDDIVER MAIN CHARAS THE OZORA FAMILY

**HIROSHI** - 21 year old genius who works in the Technology Development section of the ZIC corporation. Like many very clever people he is unbelievably disorganised - who

# PIONEER LAUNCHES

include GREEN LEGEND RAN, KISHIN TROOPS, and many more from PIONEER's extensive Japanese catalogue.

TENCHIMUYO! RYO OH KI will become only the second OAV series ever to be so popular that it has made the leap to TV series status. Following in the footsteps of MOBILE POLICE PATLABOR, whose 7-part OAV incarnation led on to two TV series, two movies, and numerous other spinoffs including a concert tour, TENCHI premieres on Japanese TV later this month.

*NOTE : For those who missed our STUDIO HELL CITY feature on TENCHIMUYO! RYO OH KI, you can still get a copy of issue 11 by sending a cheque/PO/IMO, made payable to ANIME SUBSCRIPTIONS, for £4.20 (including p & p) to ANIME UK BACK ISSUES, 70 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7DF.*

We could hardly say more about TENCHIMUYO! than Studio Hell City's dossier; however, MOLDDIVER is another matter. Colourful, zippy and gloriously cute, it features a determined heroine and a dithery hero - her brother in a story where the evils of acquisitiveness and the seductions of clothes shops have approximately equal billing. Mirai's brother Hitoshi works for a high-tech corporation during the day and is designing his own supersuit at night. Naturally he wants it to compensate for his less than super-heroic physique and generally wimpish demeanour; but when Mirai finds his plans she decides the whole thing looks just a little too macho and makes some design improvements of her own. The ensuing episodes poke gentle fun at superheroes, cross-dressing, highpowered corporations, the obsolescence of technology and, of course, the average Japanese teenage girl's twin passions for fashion and men.

PIONEER are stressing the story's interest for girls and young women, long neglected

chara designs of director Kitazume Hiroyuki, doing double duty here and working in a lighter vein than for earlier works like ZZ GUNDAM and CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK. Another director/designer crossover comes with the concept designs for a "near-future Tokyo" from KAWAMORI MASAHARU, MACROSS director. With this kind of start and the promise of more to come, PIONEER's future in the Western anime market seems assured.

but an absent-minded genius would design a morphing powersuit that only covers you for 666.6 seconds and then leaves you stark naked when you transform back? Guardian to his younger brother and sister, who treat him with no respect whatsoever, he wants to be a superhero because he's ashamed of his own rather weedy physique.

**NOZOMU** - 12 years old and the most sensible and reliable of the family, he does his best to look after the practical side of life, trying to make sure that his siblings eat breakfast, take occasional rests and don't do anything too outrageous. The practical streak hasn't obscured the family's genius, however - Nozomu is also no slouch in the brains department!

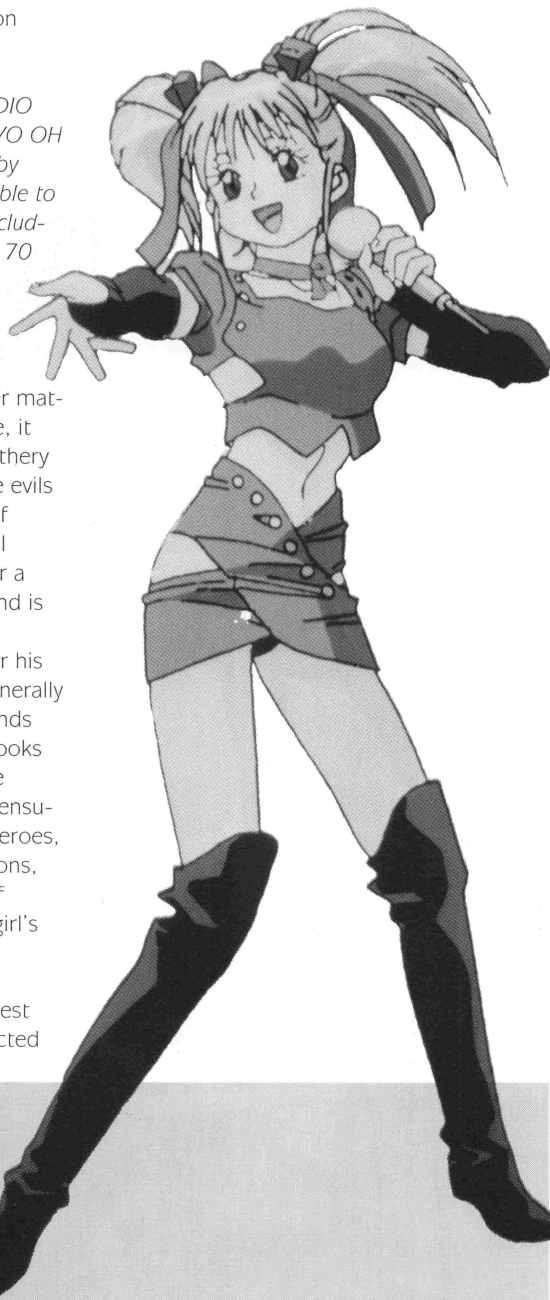
**MIRAI** - a typical 17-year-old, mad about clothes and boys and with a hopeless crush on the gorgeous MASAKI KAORU, Hiroshi's best friend, Mirai is also terrifyingly bright. she's in her second year of the special education programme at the Space Department, and when she noses around her brother's room and finds the plans for his supersuit she decides to make a few "improvements" of her own.

## THE BAD GUYS

**DR. MACHINEGAL** - a brilliant but utterly loopy scientist who still masquerades as a respected and admired member of the scientific community; in his public life he once taught Hiroshi and Kaoru, but now he's a technofreak who collects the best in antique machinery, from racing cars to space shuttles.

**ISABELLA** - Machinegal's secretary and aide, she is a beautiful but completely warped character who obeys his every command, no matter how evil.

**THE ANDROIDS** - beautiful creations in the form of the most gorgeous women from around the world - and seemingly all named for film stars, eg "Brooke" and "Jessica" - they are also deadly weapons which the Doctor uses in his attempts to steal new items for his collection.



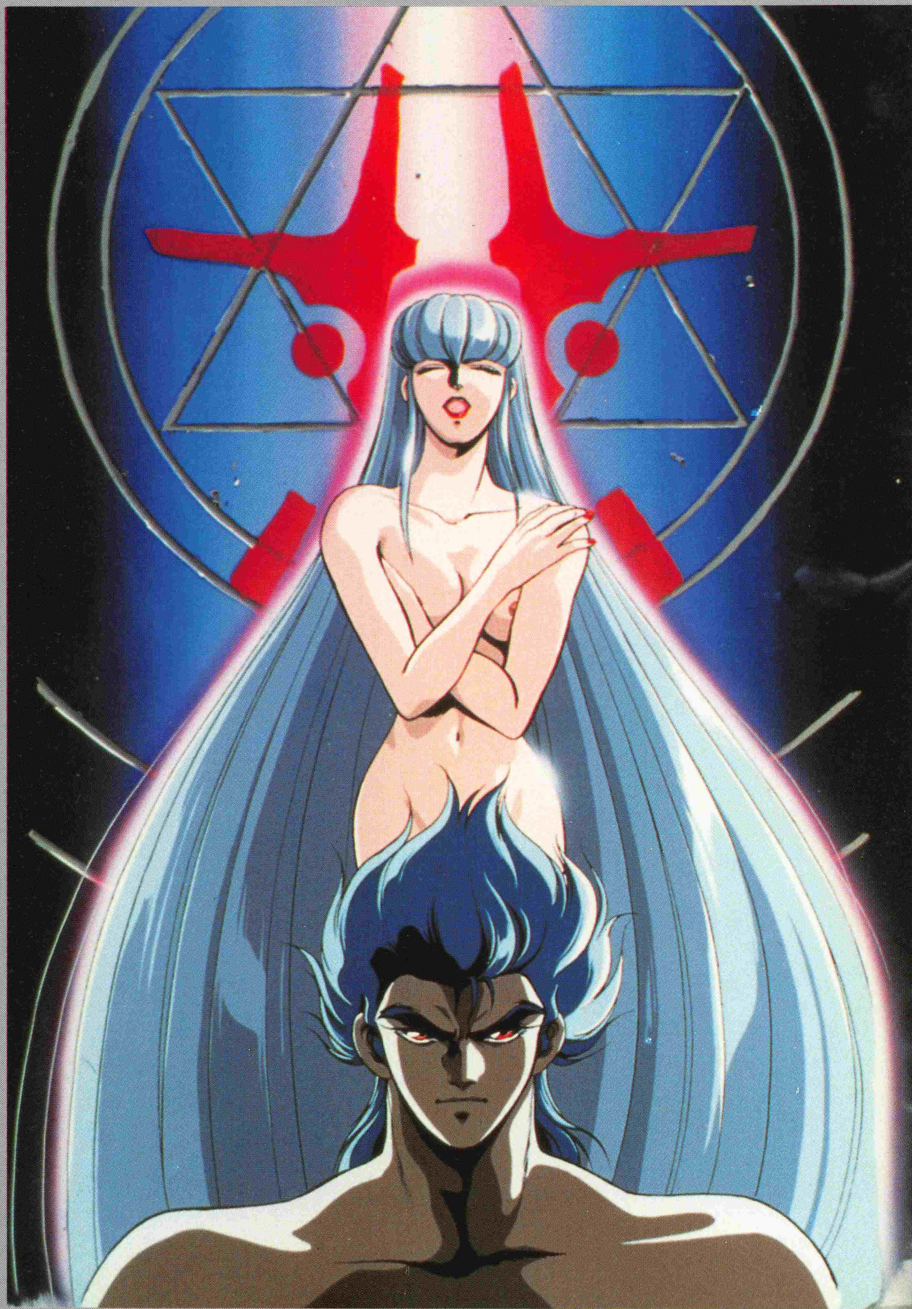
# AT LAST!



TENCHIMUYO! RYO OH KI, Tapes 1 & 2, 60 mins each, cert 12 (tbc), Cat PIO 10001 and PIO 10002, rrp £12.99 each

MOLDIVER, Tapes 1 & 2, 60 mins each, cert 12 (tbc), Cat PIO 10003 and PIO 10004, rrp £12.99 each

Projected release date for all four tapes : 10th October 1994



# ANIMANIA

ANIMATION WITH ATTITUDE



Hello, friends! I'm Masaaki Kato and I live in Japan. I went to the top fanzine event COMIKET, where we can watch so many costume players! I give you some pictures and a special page about Costume-Play in Japan. I'm looking forward to getting your impressions of this feature!

COMIKET is pronounced by us 'co-mi-ke'. It is the most huge fanzine spot sale,

the top event of its kind. It isn't a convention like ANIME EXPO, ANIME AMERICA or AUKcon. Although COMIKET means just the Comiket in Harumi in its narrow sense, its wide sense includes many other small fanzine spot sales. The event has over 200,000 attendees. (The last COMIKET, December 29-30 1993, had over 250,000 attendees but I haven't got the official figures for this time yet.) I think it is one of the biggest events all over the world!

Do you know what time the attendees arrive? Well, some of them (about 5,000

people) come the night before the event and make a line! COMIKET staff forbid them to stay up all night but this restriction is broken. Their commitment is wonderful! I got a taxi to go to Harumi at 6.00 a.m. on the first day. We saw so many attendees queuing - I think 10,000 people

or more were queuing to come in. I had taken my pictures of the Costume Play area before the opening of the entrance gate at 10.00 a.m. If any readers come to COMIKET, they had better come after noon when the queues are shorter! There is no admission fee for COMIKET, but attendees have to buy the COMIKET pamphlet beforehand - it's ¥1,200. I like this pamphlet. It has a staff message, notes and impressions (like ANIMAL!)

This time the costume play was very exciting. In Japan, costume-play isn't just confined to anime characters - other examples are comic/manga characters, popular singers, or robots. The most popular show this year is SLAM-DUNK. I think there are two reasons. The first reason is that it's the most popular TV pro-

players. I have news - RUPIN III comes back on the screen in 1995! I saw AH! MY GODDESS characters too. These characters are very famous and I saw many, many Belldandys - one, two, three, four - oh! many Belldandys. I am surrounded by Goddesses! FIVE STAR STORIES charac-

# Summer of '94 -



Ha

ters are also very popular, but the number of people playing these characters was on the decrease.

These days, the people who play game characters are on the increase in Japan. Chun-Li is an old character but she has firm popularity - I saw Chun-Li every 30 meters! The most popular game character now is Cammy.

Do you know CUTEY-HONEY? I think she is one of the most sexy characters in anime. Look at the picture of my friends as CUTEY HONEY before and after her transformation. They are twins, and are currently one of the hottest groups of "sexy costume players".

A characteristic of this Comiket's costume play is that "costumer kids are on the increase". Look at the pictures! Tibi-Sailor-Moon, Magical Princess CHACHA, Son-Goku from DRAGON BALL, Queen Selenity (SAILOR MOON S), Kurama and



gram and basketball is a popular sport all over the world. The other reason is that the clothes are very refreshing! It is very hot at Harumi in summer and it's important to make a "poromeric" costume as a player, ie one that's not too hot!

I saw DIRTY PAIR and RUPIN THE III costume





Hiei (YU YU HAKUSHO). One mother who made the costumes for Son-Goku and Queen Selenity said "I was not busy. So, I made two costumes in two hours!!" A mother's power is very strong...

Some costume players are students, others white-collar and blue-collar workers. They make their costumes after work.

They mostly have about three hours a night free for making costumes and some of them say "We need one week to make a costume, minimum period". So, some people devote a minimum of 21 hours to make their costume.

By the way, I also interviewed some attendees about their fanzine purchases. I

asked them how much they would spend on fanzines at COMIKET. Most people said "It is around ¥30,000 - ¥50,000." (If ¥160 = £1, this is about £187 - £312!) The maximum answer was ¥200,000 - about £1,250!

# rumi Costume Play



*EDITOR'S NOTE : The next COMIKET will be held at the end of December. If any ANIME UK readers plan to attend, or would like to contact our Special Costume Correspondent to tell him how they enjoyed this article, write to me and I'll forward your letters to him!*





# HMV

## MOLdiver

**MOLdiver** is super-powered action adventure at its best, mixed with uproarious comedy and superb graphics

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**TENCHI MUYO** is the anime sensation that's been taking Japan by storm! This series mixes state-of-the-art animation, provocative storylines and fast-paced action to stunning effect.

## TENCHI MUYO!

All tapes are English dubbed versions

The stage is set for an explosion of new-style anime.

KNOW HMV • KNOW VIDEO

# COMPILER



**Present for you from SAKURA STUDIO with kind assistance of Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) Inc.**

Asamiya Kia's manga series COMPILER began publication in 1990 in Kodansha's AFTER-NOON, with its first collected volume published in 1991, but until February this year the only anime version was the music video COMPILER : MUSIC CLIPS IN TRACKDOWN. This charming, often wacky and sometimes decidedly weird collection set ministories of the COMPILER charas to the music of MOON RIDERS and whetted the appetite for more. Among the music and drama CD releases which followed was the unforgettable "Bishojo Madness Album" SILENT MOBIUS VS DARK ANGEL VS COMPILER in December 93, bringing all Asamiya-sama's creations together in a perfect stocking-filler for his fans. Finally, in February and April 1994, COMPILER Hyper Quality Video 1 & 2 appeared.

#### COMPILER : THE BEGINNING

Enter Game - CONQUEST. Enter planet - EARTH. Enter date - 1997. Enter players COMPILER & ASSEMBLER. Press PLAY ... Electro-Dimension gamers Compiler and Assembler arrive on earth to play for the planet, armed with futuristic weapons and superior logic. But little slipups and inattention to detail can spoil even the best game plan ... the rules are broken when an "official human witness", Toshi Igarashi, is injured, and the game stops automatically. Now Compiler and Assembler will be deleted by the "killer bytes" Bias and Directory, two hulking goons who wouldn't be out of place in an Arnie movie - but are Earth's young men (and two of them in particular) going to stand by and let ultrababes of megabyte intensity be deleted just like that? And is Interpreter going to be able to help?

In order to find the answer you'll have to investigate every corner of the Asamiya/Kikuchi universe - the manga, the CDs and the anime - because COMPILER is a true multimedia experience. COMPILER, like SILENT MOBIUS, is an anime legend as yet untapped by any UK company, although the manga has appeared in Italian translation. STREAMLINE PICTURES have produced a US (NTSC) release of SILENT MOBIUS on NTSC video, but COMPILER has yet to reach Western screens. Let's hope we don't have to wait too much longer ...

# THE COLOURS OF AUTUMN



## SAMURAI GOLD (TBC) £10.99

Samurai Gold exposes the core of ancient evil and human weakness that lies at the heart of modern EDO - the computer system which controls major cities and space colonies.

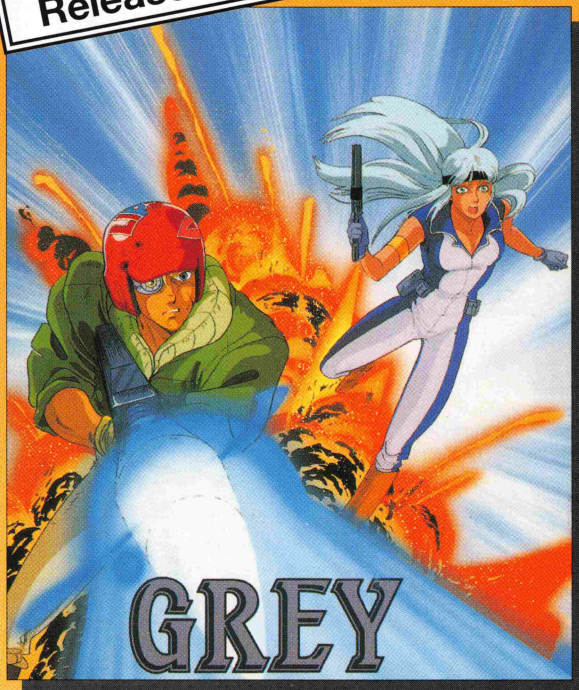
Five Senior Administrators now rule the turbulent universe, bringing peace and calm after centuries of conflicts. A sharp-eyed undercover agent is needed to support them, spotting criminals where no police force can go and bringing them to justice.

And who better to fill the role than the son of one of the Administrators, with personal as well as political loyalties to bind him?

From the same production stable as GREY, Samurai Gold mixes Japanese legend with interplanetary action.

Helen McCarthy

Release date 12th Sep. 1994



## GREY (TBC) £12.99

Grey wants to become a citizen. The only way he can achieve this is by killing enough people to progress through the six rigidly defined ranks of Troop status to rank A.

The casualties include his former girlfriend and may come to include his new love...

In our world of ethnic conflicts and human misery, GREY has an undeniable resonance.

This new translation by Jonathan Clements captures the stark simplicity of the story for a new generation of fans.

GREY is anime for the generations of Vietnam, Yugoslavia and Rwanda; The futility of war and the pointlessness of human suffering are graphically portrayed.

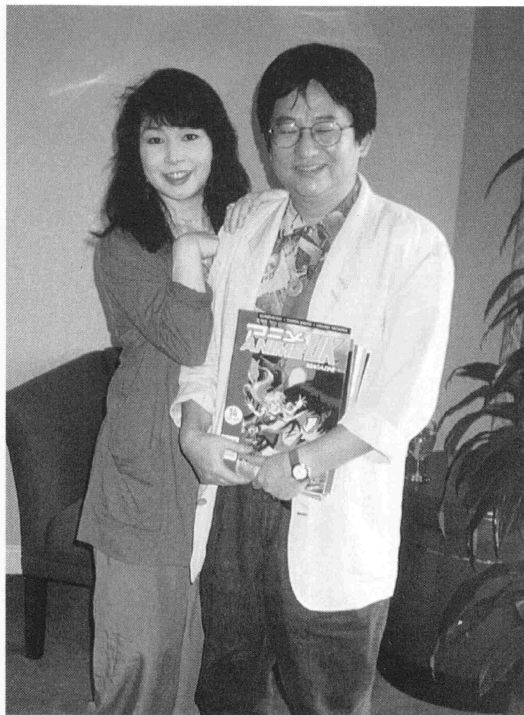
Helen McCarthy



Galactic Pirates (I - III) (18) £10.99 each

Available from The Virgin,  
HMV, Tower Records, Our Price,  
Titan Distribs. Anime Projects,  
Forbidden Planet and all other  
good video outlets.

# WESTERN CONNECTION



## Paul Watson reports

On the weekend of 29th July, about a month after ANIME EXPO, California was once again to be the target of American anime fandom. The event : ANIME AMERICA. The place : the absolutely stunning Red Lion Inn, San Jose. I had been planning to visit one of the American conventions for a few years now, and at last it was about to happen. The Guests of Honor for Anime America 1994 were NAGAI GO (creator of DEVIL-MAN, KEKKO KAMEN, MAZINGER Z and CUTIE HONEY to name a few), TAKADA AKEMI (character designer for URUSEI YATSURA, MAISON IKKOKU, KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD and PATLABOR) and INOMATA MUTSUMI (involved with projects such as CYBER FORMULA, WINDARIA and MAISON IKKOKU among others). The whole event kicked off on Thursday night with an introduction to the Guests of Honor, Nagai Go and Takada Akemi. Inomata-san had to cancel her appearance due to illness. A performance of traditional Japanese drumming by the San Jose Taiko Band set the scene for a weekend of anime related mayhem. Despite my plans to be up early, jetlag led to oversleeping and a problem with attendees' badges at registration (the printers didn't turn up with them!) meant that I finally got down to the dealers' room at 11.30, over two hours after it had opened! I had been told stories about the dealers' room, but nothing could prepare me for what lay beyond the sacred doors: over sixty tables, jammed with nearly everything you could possibly want to buy. Pens, manga, cels, video games, models and toys, you name it and it was there. I wandered around the room three times before I could even bring myself to look at a particular stall; it was all

too much to handle, so, after a brief hello to Bill Kogura at Nikaku and a short buying spree that made our John Spencer a *very* happy man (*three* rare Dirty Pair books!), I ran back to my room to get a hold of myself. The kind organisers of Anime America provided two channels of in-room anime for attendees who didn't want to venture too far from their rooms. The TV programme was excellent, a mixture of oldies with fairly new stuff; the new DOMINION featured here along with DIRTY PAIR FLASH and the recently released IRIA. So, while I watched some of the exciting anime on offer, I contemplated my next move.

Three video rooms showed a wide range of subtitled and dubbed anime. Some of the things of note on the programme were 35mm MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO and MACROSS II : LOVERS AGAIN, and Nakazawa Keiji's BAREFOOT GEN in 16mm. Video showings included PLASTIC LITTLE, DIRTY PAIR (a fan favourite), SAILOR MOON, TENCHI MUYO and the ever-present RANMA 1/2.

The con also hosted a large selection of panels and workshops covering such topics as censorship, cel painting, dojinshi (fan-made manga), vintage anime, anime/manga technology and, of course, subtitles vs dubbing (always guaranteed to rouse fans!). Panels gave fans a chance to sit and listen to the Guests of Honor talking about their past and current projects. If this wasn't enough, attendees could also visit the artshow for an impressive display of American fan art, or take part in the many games running over the course of the weekend. Friday night was party night and I went along to the modellers party to meet a few fellow anime modellers and look at some of their work. Needless to say the standard was most impressive with many a fan waving around portfolios of their efforts. At one of the other parties, I was told, Nagai sensei was seen modelling the latest Japanese fashion accessory...Mickey Mouse ears, although it was a spectacle I myself missed! Despite wanting to party the night away, jetlag caught up with me once again; I tried to sleep but just couldn't manage it, so I ended up watching the inhouse anime channel and can just remember falling asleep as SAILOR MOON came on!

Saturday was slightly more relaxed and by now the hotel was swarming with fans wearing a myriad of anime shirts. The queues for the autograph sessions by Nagai sensei and Takada sensei were enormous so I gave them a miss. I pitied their hands after doing sketch after sketch but despite this, they seemed to be having the time of their lives. Another, more sedate wander round the dealers' room left me a few dollars lighter and a marathon eat-up at the hotel restaurant a few pounds heavier. A quick tour of San Jose

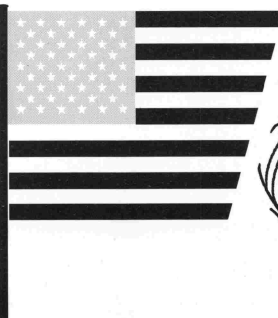
was followed by a return to the hotel to watch YUU YUU HAKUSHOU and MERMAIDS FOREST in Japanese, and then it was time for the masquerade.

The American attitude to anime masquerade compared to ours is quite amazing. At the UK cons I've attended only a handful of people seem to dress up. American fans embrace the masquerade quite eagerly - a queue started to form at the entrance a good hour before the event started. The costumes were excellent and the likes of Irresponsible Captain Tyler, Lum, Ataru, Mazinger Z, ESWAT and Ranma-chan were among the many costumes on display. Ranma-chan himself caused a great deal of embarrassment when his first lines to the crowd were "Hello ANIME EXPO 94", and the chance to redeem himself was thrown away with a repeat of the blunder; this time the crowd showed no mercy and poor Ranma-chan was drowned out by a volley of boos and hisses. If that wasn't enough to stir the crowd, the appearance of five men dressed as The Masked Pervert created quite a stir, mainly due to the fact that the costume consists of a pair of underpants, braces and a pair of ladies' panties worn as a mask. A very strange sight indeed.

Sunday was slightly more hectic than I had planned. I had to juggle my meetings with Nagai Go and Takada Akemi with checking out of my hotel room and finding a place to stash my bags. The Bay Area Animation Society came to the rescue that this point (big hello to all of you, and a special hug from our esteemed editor to Rob, Mickey and Tracey!) who chatted to me for ages and gave me somewhere to put my bags for the day. They were also providing a substitute badge for all the attendees who didn't manage to get their proper pass. As it said "We din' get no steenking badges!"

The rest of the day was spent chatting to people and, of course, meeting the Guests of Honor. It was during the chat with Nagai Go that I missed the closing ceremonies for the weekend, but I managed to make up for this by sneaking into the dealers' room for one last spending spree. Time was drawing on and so after a few goodbyes to new friends and a last long look around, it was time to head back to the airport with plans for attending next year's event already forming in my mind!

(FOOTNOTE : Paul Watson's interviews with Takada Akemi and Nagai Go will appear in ANIME UK MAGAZINE issue 17.)



**BADGES!!  
WE DIN'  
GET NO  
STEENKING  
BADGES!**

## The "Mystic Warrior" Genre in Japanese Manga and Animation

or

**Get that cloak out of my eyes please!**

One of the least understood - perhaps even most misunderstood by the Western audience - and thus rather unappreciated genres of Japanese manga and anime is that sometimes labelled "Mystic Warrior". What exactly IS the "Mystic Warrior" type of story? Generally speaking, this genre covers anything in which the characters use magic as one of their weapons, either against technology or against demonic or other mystically powered foes.

Sometimes, as in *SILENT MOBIUS*, technology is blended with magic to forge an even stronger weapon. Obviously, this genre covers a wide sweep of material, and its borders are extremely fluid. While shows such as *YOROIDEN SAMURAI TROOPERS*, *SAINT SEIYA*, *KARULA MAU!*, and *KUJAKU-O* are general acknowledged as being "Mystic Warrior" stories, what about shows like *TEKKAMAN BLADE*, where the techno-babble armor is more fantastic, or fantasy, than technological? What about *PRETTY SOLDIER SAILOR MOON*, which while normally placed in the "Magical Little Girl" category could well also find itself mentioned as a "Mystic Warrior" show? *DUNBINE* and *PANZER WORLD GALIENT* had strong elements of magic as well as technology. Some

of the *Dungeons & Dragons* type of fantasy - say, *LEGEND OF ARSLAN*, *LODOSS WARS*, *YS*, *LUNA VARUGA*, and *WIZ-ARDRY* also could be placed under the wide wings of the Mystic Warrior category. I'm sure the reader knowledgeable of older shows as well as more recent anime and manga can name many more fantastical anime and manga that sit astride the

boundary too.

In many cases, Western anime fen\* tend to think of the "Mystic Warrior" anime or manga as being "girl's shows". How many times have I heard of *SAINT SEIYA*, *SHURATO*, or *SAMURAI TROOPER* fans being put down by the words "That's just a girl's show," or, if male, "You've got to be strange if you like a girl's show like that!" Yet in Japan, many of these shows (and manga) were aimed at boys. The manga *SAINT SEIYA*, *KARULA MAU!*, and *KUJAKU-O* are based on were all published in boy's manga magazines like *YOUNG*

style far more "prettified" - usually complete with flowers, ribbons, and such in the backgrounds of almost every page; with elongated limbs and huge, star-filled eyes. These definitely are not in evidence in *KARULA MAU!*, *SAINT SEIYA*, or *KUJAKU-O*. But then, many male Western anime fen wouldn't be caught dead even looking at a shojo manga like *FROM EROICA WITH LOVE*, *THE ROSE OF VER-SAILLE*, or *WIND AND TREE SONG*, so they really have NO idea what true shojo art looks like!

It's true that a lot of female anime fen

(and a lot of the older male fen who have been in anime fandom for a while) often number many of the "mystic warrior" genre of manga or anime among their favorites. Most of the time these stories have a real plot and take the time to develop the characters. (No, I'm not claiming that these elements are absent from any other genre, even the "Babes in Battlesuits"; just that they are more commonly a main focus of the "Mystic Warrior" material.) This isn't to say that the mystic warrior story is all talking heads, though. There certainly is a lot of fighting going on, too...just take a look at *SAINT SEIYA* as an example! (As a matter of fact, the second and third seasons of the *SEIYA* TV series as well as

# Mystic Warriors

by Patrica A. Munson-Siter



*JUMP*, *SHONEN JUMP*, and *SHONEN MONTHLY*.

Perhaps Western fen\* have come to view these shows as "girl's shows" because the characters are often drawn 'pretty' by Western comic standards. Of course, anyone who has seen *REAL* girl's (usually called "Shojo") manga will know that the shojo art style depicts characters in an art

the movies tended to be non-stop action with very little character development; something that disappointed many fans of the first series.) This helps the viewer to identify with - or at least care about - the major characters.

There is also I think a certain fascination with the idea of magic that WORKS, which can be used in an offensive or defensive

\* plural of "fan"

manner. It's interesting to note that the most popular of the genre tend to be those manga and shows whose creators have created a solid groundwork in actual magical and mystic practices around the world. Those fans who are familiar with Dion Fortune's books on the mystic lodges and magical practices of turn of the century occult groups will recognize most of the spells used by Katsumi Liquer in *SILENT MOBIUS*, for example. Even *SAINT SEIYA*, *SHURATO* and *SAMURAI TROOPERS* draw heavily on such material, although the mystic traditions they draw on are unfamiliar to many in the West.

In most cases - and in almost every case of the anime and manga considered the best of the genre - the developers of each show were careful to make sure the magic used by the protagonists had specific limits. Even characters who potentially have the power of demi-gods (like Kujaku in *KUJAKU-O*) have weaknesses and limitations. The fact that such powers must be channeled through a mortal human body is acknowledged by the fact the humans using those energies must pay a price of some type when maximum power is achieved. The heroes can be defeated, and often it is more through sheer courage and will-power that they win out rather than because they are the most powerful - in quite a few cases, less powerful heroes are able to defeat

fantastically powerful enemies because they have the intelligence to use their powers to better advantage than their foes do. In "Mystic Warrior" stories, winning battles often depends more on the protagonists' intelligence and knowledge rather than pure power - something the best of the mecha shows acknowledge, too. The heroes in this genre are human at

the core; it is often their own humanity that ends up being a major factor in why they win their battles. According to the lights of most of the creators of the genre, being human, being capable of emotions, is a strength, not a weakness. In the "Mystic Warrior" genre, much more emphasis is often placed on teamwork rather than the lone fighter who is often the main protagonist of the mecha genre. How often in mecha shows is a battle determined by a single, highly skilled or gifted mecha pilot's actions? In the "Mystic Warrior" type of story, battles are



often won or lost by how well the people on either side are able to function as a team. Even Kujaku in *KUJAKU-O* often must team up with other mystic warriors to defeat enemies. In *SAMURAI TROOPERS*, for example, each of the Masho (Demon Generals - the main bad guys) is almost strong enough to defeat the Troopers; and when they face each other

individually a Masho often defeats the Samurai Trooper he faces. When they work as a team, however, the Troopers always come out on top - because the Masho can't fight as a team. They always end up fighting each other almost as much as they're fighting the Troopers, and end up splitting up to try and take on their enemies. If the Masho had been able to combine their talents the way the Troopers did, the ending of the series might have been far more different and come a lot sooner! The same can be said about many of the "Mystic Warrior" story-

lines - those on the wrong side are usually too egotistical to accept or offer help to their comrades; or the enemy is a single, powerful foe who can't understand that having a few close allies might make the difference in winning or losing a battle. Even if the enemy is supposed to operate as a team, the individual members don't think they need any help and end up fighting as individuals instead of as a team. This often means that the good guys are able to combine their powers into a single, exceptionally powerful unified blast that usually ends the battle they are engaged in. Their enemies may have the ability to do the same, but can't control their own egotism for long enough to let anyone else control their power. Furthermore, in many cases the villains can't see this predilection as a problem - instead they seem to see the need to combine powers as a display of weakness! In one

or two cases, such as *SAINT SEIYA*, the heroes don't often combine attacks - but when they do, the result is obviously greater than  $1 + 1 = 2!$  One of the major ideas in the "Mystic Warrior" genre is that these fighters are using power that comes from - or is channeled through - their own bodies, without assistance from any technological source.



(If the energy is coming from another source, it comes from sources like your patron God, a star or constellation, a mystic limbo, or even the universe at large - it isn't being sent out by a power transmitter designed by some scientist somewhere, for example.) There is the implicit assumption that anyone, with proper training and experience, can control many of the powers used by the protagonists. They may be among the BEST of those who utilize these powers; but almost anyone can learn to control the basic skills available to those who follow mystic pathways. Even by diligent study no one but another avatar of a demi-god is going to reach the level of mystic power Kujaku has; but that doesn't mean a normal human can't find at least some magical skills can become theirs to command. As a matter of fact, in most of the stories in the genre, there are lots of supporting characters at all levels of power, including raw beginner. There are quite a few cases, especially in longer-running manga series, where the ideas and suggestions of these less-powerful characters are the key to defeating some of their foes. In this way the "Mystic Warrior" genre differs from the "Super Power" genre of the West to which it is often compared. Mutant powers, bites from radioactive spiders, alien birthplaces are limited to only a few people out of millions. In the fictional universes of the "Mystic Warrior" genre, mystic powers, even if in most cases only minor ones, are available to anyone with the time and willingness to study and practice hard. It is much easier for the fan to believe he or she could learn enough magic to help - or hinder - favorite characters than it is to imagine oneself becoming a Superman.

For the most part, even the most serious of the "Mystic Warrior" shows maintain a bright

sense of humor as well. They never lose sight of the fact that even in the worst situations, a moment of laughter over a joke or gag can help relieve tension, build morale, and even help the protagonists fight harder!

One drawback to much of this genre, however, is that there is often an awful lot of gore depicted in the stories. In a mecha show, the artists can show a mobile suit or ship blowing up and you know the pilot is probably as dead as his or her mecha. In "Mystic Warrior" stories, deaths are often much more graphically detailed; in some cases you wonder if the studios have cornered the market on all the shades of red paint and are busy trying to use it all up! Anime television shows tend to be the mildest of the lot; even the worst battles resulting in death may not show detailed shots of bloody injuries. Anime movies and OAVs tend to get much more graphic, witness some of the opening scenes of the KUJAKU-O movie. Admittedly these are still mild when compared to the bloodiness of the horror anime like LEGEND OF THE OVERFIEND. And some of the manga, especially those targeted for an older male audience, can get outright gruesome. (For example, I love both BASTARD! and GODSIDER; but the gratuitous violence - and violent sex! - I could do without. Please note that the BASTARD! OAVs are MUCH milder than the manga as far as sex and violence go...) I wouldn't mind so much if the graphic details were important to plot and story development, but in many cases it could take place off screen and not change the plot one whit. In the second SAINT SEIYA movie, the most memorable battle scene is that between Dragon Shiryu and the brain-washed Cygnus Hyoga; yet we never actually get to see a single blow - all you see is trees shaking, rocks



falling; and the noise of the two men battling. One effective scene in KARULA MAU! shows blood seeping out from under a closed door. You KNOW there's a dead body in the closet; you don't have to have the door opened and the corpse fall out to confirm your suspicion. Just a close-up on the protagonists' faces as they open the door, their gasps of horror, should be more than enough...I think the creators have taken too many pages from the FRIDAY THE THIRTEENTH type of live-action horror movies that have been popular in the last two decades; they've forgotten that the human mind can imagine far worse things than they show on the screen given the right cues! All in all, the "Mystic Warrior" genre can be just as action-packed and exciting as the "Mecha" and "Babes in Battlesuits" stories can be. Don't think that because the characters are pretty, or because there are no mecha, that there isn't any excitement in fighting demons and evil spirits. Admittedly, having access to a good script, or a sub/dub copy of an anime can help expand enjoyment of a "Mystic Warrior" story - in lots of cases the storyline isn't quite as visually 'obvious' as it is in many mecha shows. (On the other hand, I know people who couldn't stand GUNDAM or LEGEND OF GALACTIC HEROES until they got scripts, subtitled copies, or at least synopses; complicated storylines are not only the province of the "Mystic Warrior" story...) Don't let the fact that some - \*ahem\* - uninformed 'fanboy' tells you that a show is a "girl's story" prevent you from watching it. You might be pleasantly surprised and find you may enjoy at least a few shows from this genre!



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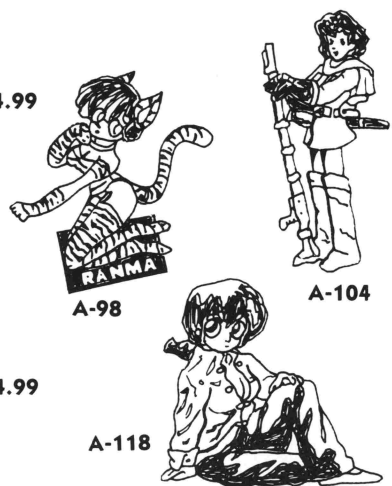
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'Genius' is not a word to be used lightly, but wherever Haruki Murakami goes it seems to enter the local vocabulary. Rumours abound that Murakami is being groomed for the Nobel Prize for Literature, an award that has only gone to Japan once before in 1968. This is rather ironic, since Murakami is the most un-Japanese of Japanese authors. With an avowed dislike for his own country, he has spent much of his life trying to escape from the culture of his birth. He studied Greek Drama at Waseda, before going off to run a jazz bar. More recently, he has spent more time outside his country than in it, preferring instead to hop around Greece and Turkey, or live off the generous writer-in-residence bursaries of American universities.

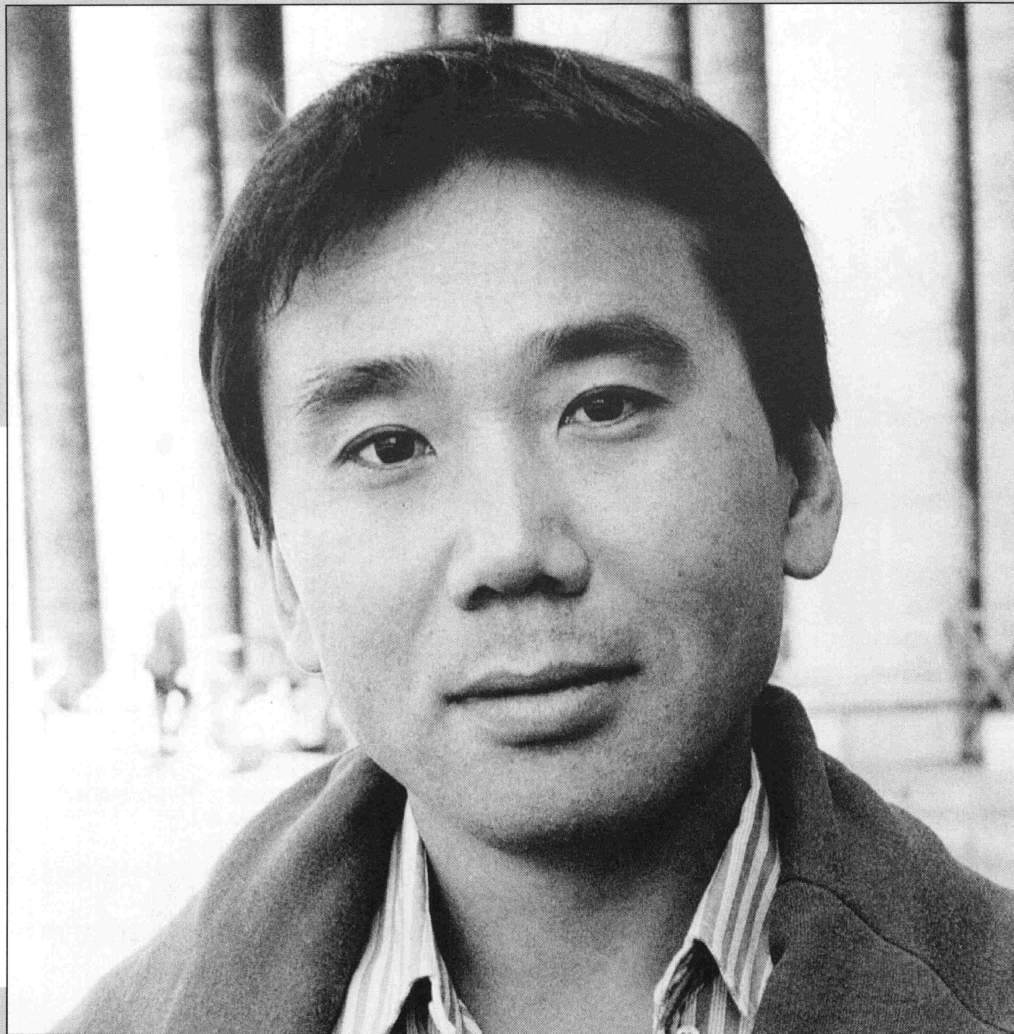
He seems to have deliberately avoided the literary tradition of his own culture, citing as his major influences American authors such as Tim O'Brien and F. Scott Fitzgerald. His interest in these authors is no mere pretension for exotica; he has translated many of their works, as well as his magnum opus, the complete works of Raymond Carver.

Americana pervades his writing; his semi-autobiographical protagonists are often obsessed by ephemera like pinball, jazz, MacDonalds or the Beach Boys. In his first book, HEAR THE WIND SING, he spends much of his time talking about Derek Heartfield, the suicidal SF author. Anyone doing a doubletake at the name gets ten brownie points; Heartfield never existed, and neither did any of the (awesome) stories that Murakami quotes, or the scholarly Heartfield study that he puts in his footnotes. Instead, heartfield is a fictional creation, put together from elements of Robert E. Howard and Yukio Mishima. He is a typical Murakami subject, a master of trash and trivia, elevated to supreme status by a Murakami protagonist seeking to assign meaning to his own life.

Murakami's characters throw themselves into popular culture with a vengeance, thrashing about in search of something to occupy their time, and, secretly, to keep the skeletons safely sequestered in their respective closets. Take the smooth-talking protagonist of PINBALL 1973, for example. He's an average guy, just trying to get by, but he does chat to exchange students from Saturn. And not all of us have to bear the terrible trauma of sharing a bed with voluptuous twins. Does Murakami, you might ask? You never really know. There's no need to ask the author, he already knows you might think he's a little nuts, and sets the record straight on page 27

by telling us what we can expect. "This" he says quite categorically "is a novel about pinball." Get to the end and you realise you've been strung a line; pinball has nothing whatsoever to do with it. True enough, the quest for a treasured Spaceship pinball machine occupies the protagonist's time and focusses the plot, but that's just to throw the reader off the scent. PINBALL 1973 plots a literary arc in space and leaves you at the end wondering just what it was curving around. The

WIND SING are only available from the infamous KEL, as is his 4 million best-seller NORWEGIAN WOOD. The first Murakami books to be available on the Western mass market were the ones that won awards in Japan. A WILD SHEEP CHASE, which is in fact the third in the series, won the Noma award and was bounced straight into international editions, firstly from Kodansha and then from Penguin. HARD BOILED WONDERLAND AND THE END OF THE WORLD



# Killing Time

by Jonathan Clements

clues are all there, tucked away in the text with such consummate skill that the book demands the reader go through it again, but this time reading the omissions, and not the inclusions.

But while overenthusiastic English reviewers might hail PINBALL 1973 as a masterpiece, Murakami disagrees. The rumour is that he is ashamed of his earlier works, and reluctant to see them graduate to international editions. Both PINBALL 1973 and HEAR THE

followed a similar course after winning the Tanizaki Prize. Murakami has been aided in this by his translator, Alfred Birnbaum, previously seen in these pages as the editor of MONKEY BRAIN SUSHI. The manuscripts that Brinbaum produces are not mere translations of the Japanese texts. He confers with Murakami over the right way to render the books into English, and such a joint venture results in an excellent reproduction of the author's intent. In the case of A WILD SHEEP

CHASE, we even get a better title. The original title, HITSUJI O MEGURU BOKEN ("An Adventure Concerning Sheep") leaves something to be desired, but Birnbaum has given us an English pun that accurately describes the contents. The book has as little to do with sheep as PINBALL 1973 does with pinball. Is the protagonist chasing after something or is he really on the run? The answer of course is both, and the reader becomes Murakami's confidante as he tries to find out for himself what is motivating his characters. The sequel to A WILD SHEEP CHASE, DANCE DANCE DANCE, is now available from Hamish Hamilton. The protagonist goes to stay at his favourite hotel in Hokkaido, only to discover that it has been replaced by a gigantic edifice of glass and steel. But the original hotel is still there, accessible through an inter-dimensional elevator, and our hero finds himself discovering its dark secret. There's a murder investigation, a filmstar scandal, plenty of sex, a search for missing persons and some helpful hints on restaurant journalism, and as always these are all diversions set up to lead you away from the truth.

For all his charm, Murakami's hero is a lonely man, and one who has realised only too well that loneliness is not an absence of company, but of kind. In his search for like-minded people he talks to sheep (well, it's a start), pursues a long-dead starlet, and wanders into a parallel universe where he can chat to the daughter he never had. He even meets her father, his alternate self, who with typical Murakami irony is a once-great novelist become literary hack.

In DANCE DANCE DANCE, Murakami goes further than usual in actually stating his concern. This time, the hole in the text is signposted as the hole in our lives, that thing that spurs us on to the trivial pursuits which will never fill it. For Murakami, the missing part of his life is that special someone, the Everygirl that leaps from almost every one of his pages. The face of every woman he sees blurs into hers, and he tries to sidestep this by highlighting the trivial. One of his girlfriends has, we are told, magic ears. Another's ghost haunts a Beatles album. Our hero is clutching at straws, trying to find something that will convince himself that this one is THE one.

This passion is the most poignant element of Murakami's works, and nowhere is it more obvious than in his short story ON SEEING THE 100% PERFECT GIRL ONE BEAUTIFUL APRIL MORNING. Two people, absolutely made for each other, pass on a bustling Tokyo street. That's it. For Murakami, the awful tragedy is that they walked on; they didn't stop, they didn't talk, and now they may never get the chance again. Murakami's protagonists, fated to wander the Earth in search of their other halves, live half-lives without them. Everything is trivial, because life alone consists of killing time, waiting. In some of Murakami's stories, this other half has been and gone, and the hero alternates between killing time and searching desper-

ately for some way to bring her back. The fact that she may be dead only serves to drive his desperation further, as he seeks her by any means possible, however arcane. The hero of the books eventually throws in his cards, and decides to write a novel informed by infinite despair. Let's call it HEAR THE WIND SING ...

As far as foreign sales go, Murakami is the most successful Japanese author since Mishima. Perhaps it's the universal quality of his themes, since the cynical yet romantic hero has been a staple of Western culture since CASABLANCA. Obviously, Alfred

Birnbaum deserves some of the credit, since his translations are models of perfection, but in the crisp, witty prose of Murakami he already had something good to get his teeth into. In several issues of ANIME UK I've been calling for Japanese publishers to stop capitalising on their exotic appeal and offer us writers who do not need to be patronised to be enjoyed. Murakami truly deserves to be a world class author, because in him we have a writer whose nationality is of no importance whatsoever when set beside his unquestionable talent. Kill some time; invest in one of his books today.

## WORKS OF HARUKI MURAKAMI AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH

*In each case the list includes the English title, date of original release, most readily available English edition and English release date.*

### *(Loosely-linked series)*

HEAR THE WIND SING	1979	KEL	1987
PINBALL 1973	1980	KEL	1985
A WILD SHEEP CHASE	1982	Penguin	1990
DANCE DANCE DANCE	1988	Hamish Hamilton	1994

### *(Other Works)*

NORWEGIAN WOOD (2 vols)	1987	KEL	1989
HARD-BOILED WONDERLAND AND THE END OF THE WORLD	1985	Penguin	1991
THE ELEPHANT VANISHES	1993	Hamish Hamilton	1993

### *(short stories)*

## INCOMING! release roundup

12 Sept	Roujin Z	80m £12.99 cert 15	Manga Video
	Guyver Data Six	28m £5.99 cert PG	Manga Video
	Zeguy	75m £12.99 cert PG	Manga Video
	Tokyo Babylon 2	50m £9.99 cert 15	Manga Video
	UY4: Lum the Forever (sub)	95m £12.99 cert PG	Anime Projects
	UY5: Final Chapter (sub)	85m £12.99 cert PG	Anime Projects
	Grey (sub)	75m £12.99 tbc	Western Connection
	Samurai Gold (sub)	50m £10.99 tbc	Western Connection
19 Sept	Black Magic M66 (sub)	45m £12.99 cert 15	Kiseki
	Ambassador Magma vol 3	55m £10.99 cert 15	Kiseki
	Overfiend III vol 3	50m £9.99 cert 18	Kiseki
	Robotech vol 1 (eps 1-3)	75m £12.99 cert U	Kiseki
31 Sept	Bubblegum Crisis 1-4 (re-issue)	var. £12.99 cert PG	Anime Projects
10 October	Guyver Data Seven	28m £5.99 cert PG	Manga Video
	Devilman 2	55m £11.99 cert 18	Manga Video
	Cyber City 808 vol 1	40m £9.99 cert 15	Manga Video
	Tenchi Muyo 1 & 2 (2 eps ea)	60m £12.99 cert PG	Pioneer
	Moldiver 1 & 2 (2 eps ea)	60m £12.99 cert PG	Pioneer
24 October	Robotech vol 2	75m £12.99 cert U	Kiseki
	Starblazers vol 2	95m £10.99 cert U	Kiseki
31 October	Genesis Survivor Gaiarth II (sub)	46m £12.99 cert PG	Anime Projects

*(Unfortunately guys: - all information is subject to change!)*

# ANGRY YOUNG MEN

## *Grey Death vs Samurai Gold*

by Julia Sertori

This September saw the release of two recycled samurai vendettas with a twist, but the overall effect of each is radically different. Both anime are from Tokuma Japan, and share many of the same production staff. Both are tales of a dogged quest for revenge, and in both cases victory has a bitter taste, but the tone in each is not necessarily one of a samurai-style obedience to feudal authority, but of resistance to it. While GREY is a bleak, nihilist tale along the lines of ROLLERBALL or PLATOON, SAMURAI GOLD is a lightweight comedy with all the pathos of TERRY AND JUNE. Despite their differences, these two anime also share a lot of themes that give away their related crews and contemporaneous production schedules.

### FIGHT THE POWER

In Grey's case, our hero starts off as an apathetic civilian, before becoming the perfect soldier when he finds a system to believe in. When it becomes clear that this system cannot deliver what it promises, he begins to fight back, initially with simple insubordination. The disappearance of red, his mentor, turns him into an outright anarchist, and the system that created him is unable to survive his assault.

Samurai Gold is a wastrel, drinking away his time in seedy bars ever since being disowned by his father. But when his father is injured by an unknown attacker, Gold heads off to find the culprit. The trail, however, leads back to his father, who is implicated in the murder of a Duke opposed to the government. When Gold discovers that his father's attacker is in fact the avenging son of the Duke, he switches sides, hunting through ever higher levels of the government until he discovers that the order to murder the Duke came from the central computer itself.

### BIG MAMA IS WATCHING YOU

Both Grey and Gold have to deal with a gigantic computer that attempts to control their lives. Some healthy misogyny ensures that both the offending domination machines are referred to by the female pronoun. In the case of Big Mama in GREY, this actually necessitates a "sex-change", since 'her' previous incarnation is actually referred to as "my son" by its creator. Big Mama begins life as a gaming computer called TOY, that starts thinking for itself and decides that all humans really want out of life is death. Hence the TERMINATOR-inspired war that nearly wipes out the entire race.

In SAMURAI GOLD, the computer Edo is designed specifically for government, but the problem lies in her interpretation of her mandate. Edo seeks to rule efficiently, but has not been programmed with the concept of ruling justly. So when her usefulness is questioned by Duke Plenmatz, she does the logical thing and orders his death.

The difference between GREY and SAMURAI GOLD is the way in which the script handles the computer's hubris. When GREY's Big Mama is revealed to be the ruthless orchestrator of the war, Grey resolves to turn it off. But in SAMURAI GOLD, Edo claims she will "sentence herself", and it is unclear whether this means she shuts herself down or merely reforms voluntari-

ly. Where GREY has a bitter, anarchic morale to its ending, SAMURAI GOLD has a saccharine conservatism that would be quite at home in the Daily Mail.

At the end of GREY, the protagonist has carried out his mission, but it is unlikely that he has survived to enjoy his victory. (The anime spares us the sight of Nova's death; in the manga, Grey is left to attack TOY on his own.) Whether Grey succeeds in his mission or not is irrelevant, since Robert J. Dimitri has already told him that the Earth is losing its ability to support life of any kind. But in SAMURAI GOLD, despite the crimes committed in Edo's name, the implication is that there has been a bit of a mishap, but everything has been cleared up and now it's time for business as usual. Edo may claim to have 'reformed', but we only have her word for that. The same corrupt clique is running the galaxy, the disinherited son of Duke Plenmatz is happily working in a bar, and Gold himself is back carousing in Cheapside with his floozy.



### THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER

Grey and Gold are very much from opposing sides of the tracks. Grey has nothing to rely on but himself; he steals or fights for what he needs. Something of an underclass hero, he hails from the slums and elects to remain there. He is uneasy in Nova's classy apartment, and instead gazes out of the window, thinking wistfully of his long-dead homegirl. Samurai Gold, on the other hand, is a bored rich kid who has every appearance of someone playing at the rough life. His father has disowned him in name only; just a week after walking out of his downtown watering-hole he has already walked straight into his daddy's old job. Everything is cosy for Samurai Gold; even his bit on the side conveniently turns out to be a princess in disguise. That's nice, isn't it?

### LIPS TICK ON YOUR COLLAR

Something that GREY and SAMURAI GOLD do share is a protagonist with a warped motive. Both have had to reform their youthful excesses; Gold has to turn aside from his dissolute lifestyle, while Grey has to shake off the apathy that drove Lips away in the first place. However, while both of them getsome kind of result, their initial reasons for doing so are question-

able. Gold seems to hanker after justice for the Duke's murderer purely because it is a way of getting back at his father; the criminals he catches in the process are almost accidental (incidental?) Grey, it can be argued, only resolves to destroy Big Mama because the alternative involves admitting his own complicity, through inaction, in Lips' fatal decision to join the army. Grey may think he's avenging Lips, but he's really fighting for his idea of her. His image of her, rather than her actual personality, dominates the film. Her motif is emblazoned on his helmet and the front his his car. But when we actually see her in the flashback scenes, she does not seem to inspire the kind of regard in which Grey holds her. But Lips' death becomes a catalyst that throws Grey into action, and that same action eventually makes Lips surplus to requirements. There is a strange progression here: Lips can't bear the slum life, and leaves Grey when he refuses to accompany her; Lips dies, and Grey joins up to forget her; Grey

becomes the kind of person Lips would never have wanted to leave; Grey then rejects all of the values that Lips strove for. His 'love' for her is doubtful, perhaps he even hates her ...

### GLAD TO BE GREY

That's not to say that Grey is a misogynist, he is outstandingly egalitarian in his hatred of everybody. He even turns down the homosexual advances of one of his fellow Troopers. This scene in GREY, it is implied, demonstrates the extent to which violence and terror dehumanise the humans. The Troopers, starved of love, will seek any port in a storm. Grey's suitor Tim is rebuked for moving in on him before his previous lover is even cold, but dismisses it with a "... that's too bad". An exact interpretation of the director's intent is difficult to gauge. It could be argued that the gay characters in GREY are being held up as examples of human love winning through, despite Big Mama's attempt to turn the human race into machines. This would pair it with the wonderful opening shot, where Grey's boot seemingly squashes an ant, which walks unharmed out of his footprint and

into the distance. Life, and love, go on regardless.

However, it is equally possible to argue that the gay characters in GREY are there to show how 'corrupt' the world of 2588 A.D. has become, with Big Mama's battles stripping humanity of the morals of the past. It would then be necessary to pair Tim's attempted seduction of Grey with a later scene in which Fan off-handedly tells Nova that she is pregnant "... and might even get married soon". It is difficult to tell exactly which effect the director was hoping for, and matters are not helped by the appearance of similarly ambiguous scenes in SAMURAI GOLD, wherein we are introduced to the sickle-wielding bodyguard, Okama-san. This is a pun on 'kama' (sickle/pick) and 'okama' (sodomite), tastefully rendered in the English translation as 'The Gay Blade'. Okama is a figure of fun in SAMURAI GOLD, initially presented as a villain, but one whose motives are shown to be honourable. His homosexuality provides much of the almost-comic material in most of SAMURAI GOLD's almostfunny scenes, but the spirit in which it is intended is unknowable. I have gay friends who would laugh themselves silly at Okama's antics, and others who would try and

assassinate the writer if they ever found out. The intention, and indeed the relevance, of these scenes in the anime has to remain a matter of personal taste.

**ALL THAT GLITTERS ...**

When it comes down to the final analysis, there is no real contest between GREY and SAMURAI GOLD. Put plainly, one is rather good, and one is quality-challenged. SAMURAI GOLD may have an audience somewhere out there in the younger (PG-ish) market of Finbarr Saunders fans who also enjoy mixing STAR WARS ripoffs with MURDER SHE WROTE. GREY has an adult market of people who have had enough of mindless consumption. Its message is damning and tragic. Fight back; you can't win, but you can take some of the bastards with you.



**GREY vs PEPPER**

GREY shares many themes with another of Tagami's recent works, the cowboy manga PEPPER. Pepper is another laconic protagonist, a bounty-hunter in the Clint Eastwood mould whom we initially see totting up the dollar-value of his most recent kills. PEPPER is also a quest, with the eponymous hero and his ally, coincidentally called Gold, trying to reassemble a collection of guns. Tagami's cultural distance from the Wild West brings an interesting new angle to the story. The manga is definitely an attempt at a serious treatment of the cowboy genre; Tagami makes no attempt at contriving the inclusion of Japanese characters, and even the sound effects are written in Roman letters. The author's own origins are betrayed only through a few inadvertent slips in Japlish sign-lettering, or an anachronistic place-name like Martian Valley. But PEPPER somehow fails to grab the reader's attention in the same way. Its 19th century setting prevents Tagami from showing off his latest mecha design, and its hero's wanton destruction has no meaning. Grey kills because he has to; the only alternative is killing himself. But Pepper kills because he wants to; it's a good way of making a fast buck.

JONATHAN CLEMENTS

**Boiling Point**

ICA Projects, cert 18, subtitled, £13.99

After Violent Cop in 1989, actor/director Takeshi Kitano's next film was Boiling Point in 1990, though he only played a minor, if telling, role. Its 'hero' is Masaki, a young loser obsessed by baseball who works at a gas station, where he ends up hitting a local yakuza member. From there, the situation escalates as more people are dragged into a spiralling cycle of violence. A friend is beaten up, and Masaki heads to Okinawa intending to buy a gun - the perceived solution to his problems. There he runs into the ruthless thug played by Kitano, also involved in his own dispute with the local gang. Influenced by European art movies in its handling of real time, there is no melodrama here. The pace is slow, measured, almost hypnotic, aided by excellent photography. The setting is mundane and everyday, though being set in Tokyo and Okinawa gives it an exotic feel to the western viewer (doubtless

**LIVE AND KICKING**

unintended). The violence is sudden, shocking and brutal. And in contrast to the films of John Woo, it's handled realistically - people get hurt, or they end up in hospital, or they end up dead.

Takeshi is a master at subverting established conventions and producing the unexpected. When a kid 'borrows' a motor bike and roars off for a joyride, it's a standard situation from youth rebel movies, but it cuts almost instantly to the boy's blood smeared face as he sits in the road after crashing the bike. The Kitano character has a brief moment of victory using a gun hidden in a bouquet of flowers (a new definition of flower power?), but like all the characters in the film, violence seems to offer solutions, but is ultimately futile. Masaki eventually obtains a gun but fails because he can't take the safety off. He eventually returns with a *much* bigger 'gun'. Or does he? The ending is ambiguous. The message of this film is that you can't buck the system. In Violent Cop the system was authority and the police. In Boiling Point, it is the 'alternate' system of the gangster ethic. This must be reassuring to an audience schooled in oriental Confucianism - don't rock the boat, or things will just get worse.

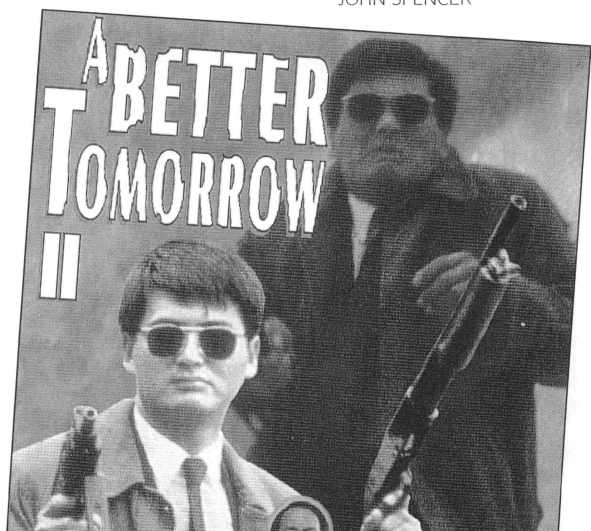
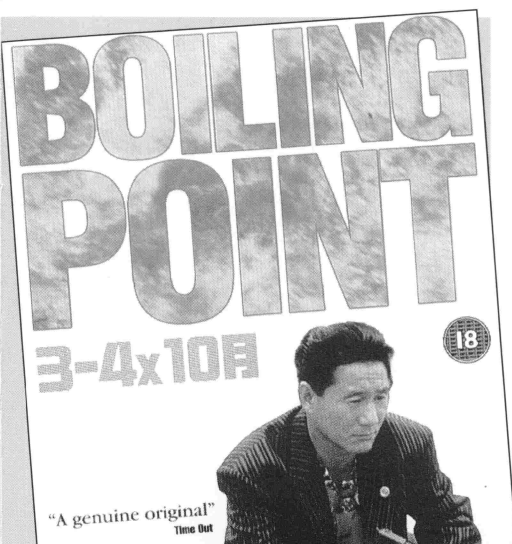
**A Better Tomorrow II**

Made In Hong Kong, cert 18, subtitled, £12.99

Like Kitano, John Woo has found growing fame in the West, and this film also has violence at its core. However, there the resemblance ends as the treatment is completely different, with about as much realism as a

Tom and Jerry cartoon. Woo has built his reputation on incredibly stylish action sequences in a genre virtually created by him - 'heroic bloodshed', and this is not going to disappoint any of his fans. The hero of the first movie died - but luckily he had a twin brother (Chow Yuen Fat) living in New York. And guess what? He is forced to return to Hong Kong and avenge the murder of an old friend's daughter in a complex saga of tragedy, betrayal and revenge. Cue massive collateral damage as a mismatched team of cop/gangster kindred spirits embark on an orgy of retribution, climaxing with one of the most gloriously destructive over the top shoot-outs ever filmed. With an extremely fine cast in Fat, Ti Lung (Barefoot Kid) and Leslie Cheung (Chinese Ghost Story), for my money it has a stronger story than Hard Boiled, but not quite as good as The Killer; you can take your choice - for sheer visual style, John Woo and Chow Yuen Fat (*born to wear shades!*) are hard to beat.

JOHN SPENCER



**ZEGUY**

**MANGA VIDEO, MANV 1052, cert PG, 72 mins approx**  
Coming so soon after the PG-rated *MARIS THE WONDERGIRL*, *ZEGUY* may well represent a new policy to provide less grist for the censorship mill. It is the sort of anime that would look nice on TV. It has a definite pre-teen appeal and could represent a concerted effort to recharge Manga Video's current 18-23 customer base with a few Manglets. After all, these kids are going to be old enough to buy 15-rated videos in the near future, and a few PGanime might represent a good investment in their future purchasing power.

The plot is good fun. Time-travelling troubleshooters Toshizo and Gennai must prevent the evil Himiko from opening the gate from her world to ours, so preventing the usual world domination. They have two sailor-suited school-girls to aid them, of course, but are lined up against a squad of smart enemies, including Leonardo da Vinci (!)

*ZEGUY* has a lot of the 'fairy-tale feel' to it, hence its heightened appeal to younger viewers. Older fans may not be so interested, especially since a lot of the original clout of the script appears to have been sanded down by a production company uneasy with too many Japanese references. The sleeve notes should be a hint: *ZEGUY*, we are told, has an "alternative" title back in Japan. Surely they mean that the original title has been altered? The presence of da Vinci is a good indicator of many more historical references that have been occluded, possibly for being too 'foreign'. The arch-baddie is an actual historical figure from the 3rd century, renowned as one of Japan's first unifiers and a sorceress to boot. Ditto for our time-travelling samurai, who are both alumni of the 19th century ultra-nationalist Shinsengumi. *ZEGUY* is the Japanese equivalent of an SF movie pitting Robin Hood and General Gordon against Merlin, but these resonances have been lost, with only a few bits and pieces like Leonardo's helicopter remaining as reminders of the tale's original point.

However, that's enough about what *ZEGUY* could have been if it had been produced by someone like AnimEigo. Manga Video have turned a very clever story into an everyday cartoon, but that is the market for which they are aiming and so that is the framework in which *ZEGUY* has to be reviewed.

Put plainly, *ZEGUY* is entertaining. A lot of kids will love it, and the dub is extremely well assembled. The voice actors are all convincing, although Himiko could have been a bit more evil. George Roubicek's script, or rather Studio Nemo's, depending on where you draw the line, is witty and enjoyable. An unscrupulous production house might have thrown in as much gratuitous swearing as possible to bump the rating up to 15 and mislead the audience as to the content, but *ZEGUY* avoids this trap. In fact, when one of the characters uses the anime's only four-letter word, she is chastised for it, and that makes a nice change.

So *ZEGUY* is a worthwhile buy for the younger fans; indeed, it's good value for money. But more discerning viewers might be annoyed by the way in which the original has been minced. Manga Video play up the Japanese origins in their logo, but seem unwilling to follow through when they actually go into the studio. If subtitled and liner notes represent one end of the

scale in the treatment of anime, *ZEGUY* belongs at the opposite extreme among the mix-and-match "Japan? Where's that?" 'adaptations' of the 1970s. If that's what you wanted from the British anime industry, then that's what you've got.

JULIA SERTORI

**KAMIKAZE SQUADRONS GUNBUSTER eps 5-6,**

KISEKI FILMS, KIS

If there were anime awards this year, this would sweep the boards for Script, Direction, Translation, Voice Acting (M/F lead and supporting), Design and just about everything else. There's no real need to give a synopsis, it's all back in *AUK #4* ...

As *GUNBUSTER* gets better and better, episode 5 finds us with the girls setting a trap for the Space Monsters near Planet Raioh. The name means 'Thunder King' in Japanese, but Coach Ota is having a little punning fun. 'Raioh' is a homonym for 'Leper King', the character in a Mishima play who builds a temple to the Spirit while his Body rots away with a fatal disease. Sound familiar?

*GUNBUSTER* isn't just Coach's legacy to the human race, it's also the last line of defence in the war to end all wars. Wartime references in the later episodes aren't too difficult to spot. The Japanese are fighting an insurmountable enemy that is edging ever closer to the Home Islands. The last-ditch defence launches from Okinawa (of course), the pilots prepared to lay down their lives if necessary. As the fleets clash at the centre of the galaxy in episode 6, the damage total flashes across the screen, listing the number of spacecraft that have been 'sunk' (sic). The Buster Machines are two irreplaceable battleships, a Musashi and a Yamato for the Japanese of the future, while Buster Machine 3 is the ultimate bomb, wishfully handed over to the side it was dropped upon in 1945.

This may be another reason why *GUNBUSTER* is such a powerful work. It is unimportant whether or not Hideaki Anno realised the implications of his script, the feelings behind it are very definitely there. There is also much to be said for the English script. Toshifumi Yoshida and Trish Ledoux have produced the perfect model for future translators. Colloquialisms are superbly rendered, idiomatic expressions are unstilted, and a few tiny additions bring even more life to the script. In one notable moment, the Japanese script reads "22/5/2048", but the translators have added "(Friday)". In fact, the 22nd May 2048 will be a Friday, but a Friday that most of us are unlikely to see. Thinking about that particular Friday, I suddenly felt very small. Dwarfed by time and space, in fact ... There, we've given you enough hints. GO OUT AND BUY IT!!!

JONATHAN CLEMENTS

**TOKYO BABYLON PART 2,**

MANGA VIDEO MANV, 52 mins, cert 15

I must admit to some confusion over this anime; when I settled down to watch it, I kind of expected something along the lines of the earlier *MANGA* titles *MONSTER CITY* and *WICKED CITY* - at least, that's what the advert blurb led me to think, talking about "brutal murder, debauchery, ruinous excesses", etc. Debauchery and excess there ain't, but there is a fair amount of brutal murder, so I guess one

out of three isn't too bad.

What you have in Part 2 is more adventures of the young and fey exorcist Subaru when he gets involved with a pretty psychic who's helping the Tokyo cops catch a subway serial killer. Based on the shojo manga from those talented girls at Studio CLAMP, the story is best described as part-romance and part-police thriller, reminiscent in some ways of movies like *THE EYES OF LAURA MARS* or the more recent *FEAR*. Subaru and his friends really don't hold centre stage in Part 2, because the story's main focus is the psychic, a lonely soul gifted (or cursed, depending on your point of view) with the power of postcognition, or seeing into the past. In her work with the police she's forced time and again to relive the attacks by reading the psychic vibrations in the surrounding walls, and she and Subaru cross paths through their mutual experiences.

The plot is a bit predictable, but it's nicely executed, with a couple of twists and turns in the generally straight ride. The shojo styling is strongly present, from the thin and drawn imagery of the psychics, through to the almost clone-like twin-ness of Subaru and his wacky sister Hokuto. The androgyny of pretty-boy heroes like Subaru are a staple of shojo tales, and, in honesty, I had to concentrate quite hard before I decided what his gender was. Another point about imagery comes from the abundance of religious iconography around Subaru's character; the outfits he wears seem to be almost parodies of Jesuit robes, complete with massive and no doubt weighty golden crosses. The murderer himself sports a wooden crucifix, and Subaru's mysterious mentor has one on his tie, suspiciously placed upside down. More than likely, the heavy-handed use of the cross symbolism comes from a desire to produce an effect, in much the same way several shojo tales use Nazi imagery.

In general, the look and design of modern-day Tokyo and the characters is of a good standard, and the dub, while not exactly ground-breaking, is balanced just right for *TOKYO BABYLON*'s tone. The voice actors are competent and gel together pretty well, although the usual gripe about Brits taking American accents pops up now and then when the odd word drops out of characters. Without having seen the first *TOKYO BABYLON*, I can't vouch for the series as a whole, but certainly *PART 2* is a refreshing diversion from the norm, and I'll be glad to see more of it.

JIM SWALLOW

**STAR BLAZERS Vol 1,**

KISEKI, KIS 93027, 98 mins, cert U

If you cast an eye right now over the anime market in the UK, you'll more than likely be unable to find any material with a production date earlier than 1980. Why? The answer you might get from a video distributor is that no-one wants to see old stuff - new and up-to-date material is where it's at, with lots of verve and 90s production technology. Well, maybe. And maybe not. We see *STAR BLAZERS* on the shelves of our video store for one big reason - it was requested by fans. Now you ask "What's so hot about an sf soap made waaaay back in 1974?" Without wanting to be patronising, *STAR BLAZERS*, or to give it its original title, *SPACE CRUISER YAMATO* (*UCHU SENKAN YAMATO*) is quite simply a classic.

The animation isn't that hot. The designs are best described as "funky". The plots are a bit wobbly. And the American dub'n'cut done by Westchester Films is lacklustre. But it's still a classic, just like the old STAR TREK TV show; if you look too hard you see the joins, but you still love it.

In the same way as a lot of older episodic TV anime, STAR BLAZERS is an epic, a great sprawling tale of war and love, of terrible costs and high adventure. In its native incarnation it spawned five movies and three tv series, and now another OAV series is just seeing the light of day - once again, it's hard not to make comparisons with STAR TREK and its spin-offs. The first season of twenty-six episodes, which KISE-KI are bringing us in six volumes, is subtitled "The Quest for Iscandar", and it charts the year-long journey of the space cruiser Argo from Earth to the distant world Iscandar (over 296,000 light years away - quite a hike!) The Argo's mission is one of life and death for the entire population of a future Earth turned to desert after constant bombardment by the galactic conqueror race known as the Gamilons. The destruction wrought by the evil Leader Desslok and his people has caused radiation to penetrate deep into the ground, seeping into the underground cities where mankind struggles to hold on to life. With certain extinction looming, a ray of hope arrives in the form of a message from Queen Starsha of Iscandar, promising Earth a device called the Cosmo-DNA which will erase the radioactive threat and heal the world. With Earth's spacefleets depleted, a secret battlecruiser is readied for the journey: the rebuilt Japanese warship Yamato, made spaceworthy, renamed, and equipped to travel to Iscandar. Charged with the awesome job of getting there and back in a year is a crew of all the usual stereotypes: wacky robot, tough young hero, man with a dark secret, crusty engineer, strong captain, token cute girl, etc. For fans of true space opera, STAR BLAZERS is just that, with all the chestbeating dramatics and the battles fought like naval exercises, mixed with nasty and irredeemable (or not ...) bad guys and a healthy dose of the final frontier for good measure. If you have a hankering for nostalgia, watch this. And even if you don't, watch this. As my esteemed co-reviewer Helen McCarthy said about ROBOTECH, "You're buying a legend here", and that's just as true of STAR BLAZERS. You may take a look and pass it by as nothing more than an oldhat curio, but if you count yourself as a real anime enthusiast, do take a look. SPACE CRUISER YAMATO came before STAR WARS, before ROBOTECH, before AKIRA, before everything you see in the UK marketplace, and all of them owe it a debt for being one of the trailblazers; kudos to KISEKI for bringing out this old warhorse for just one more battle.

JIM SWALLOW

*We could hardly get one of the usual team to review our own tape, so here's the verdict of special guest reviewer PAUL COOK, editor of that fab fanzine ANIMACE, on*

#### KO CENTURY BEAST WARRIORS

Right from what must be one of the most enjoyable opening credit sequences yet seen in a UK anime release (dig that silly theme song) it's clear that this video is something special.

This has sparkle. This has zip. This is everything anime should be. If you're not a fan of cute, fear not. BEAST WARRIORS is less overly cute than it is wonderfully wacky. We are thrown head first into a fantasy world whose native inhabitants are 'beasts', creatures who have both a humanoid and a humanoid/animal hybrid form. The real humans are the enemy; on the run from their dying homeland, they are searching for the mysterious entity known as 'Gaia'. Wan Dabada (tiger), Badd Mint (bird) and Meima (mermaid) must somehow beat them to it. Aiding them are Mekka (turtle) and the defecting humans Doctor Password and his granddaughter Yuni (cute!), as well as the mechanical totems from each of the beasts' tribes.

One of the things that makes KO CENTURY stand out is its excellent characterisation. The beasts are not super-powerful, having all the attendant weaknesses as well as the strengths that their animal heritage brings. In fact they wouldn't last long if they didn't have their totems to constantly bail them out, which does give an excuse to show some major kick-ass mecha action.

The dub is extremely well done, and it's nice to hear actors and actresses whose ages suit the characters they are playing, instead of grown-ups putting on kiddie voices. It takes a while to get used to Wan and Meima's 'Souf London' accents, and Dr. Password's accent wanders from Ireland to Scotland and all destinations in between, but the volume levels of the dialogue, music and sound effects actually match one another (unlike the dubs of NUKU-NUKU or RIDING BEAN). The real star of the show, however, must be Jim Swallow, who provides a laid-back Californian accent which suits Badd Mint down to the ground. The eco-friendly storyline is enhanced with some wonderful villains like thunderbolt thrower V-Daan ("You're going to DIE"), mischievous imp Akumako ("Kill everyone"), and quiet but deadly martial artist V-Zhon (with her amazing transforming weapon). And is it just me or does Badd's totem bear an uncanny resemblance to the Fiery Phoenix from BATTLE OF THE PLANETS?

As V-Daan would say "Buy buy buy buy buy!". Here's hoping future AUK releases will be just as good

PAUL COOK



## LEGEND OF THE ANTIGRAIL (UROTSUKIDOJI gets a conscience)

It's that time of year again. KISEKI have given their production staff plenty of tranquillisers and embarked upon that questionable honour, the dubbing of UROTSUKIDOJI episodes III.3 and III.4. "The Fall of Caesar's Palace" and "Passage into the Unknown" represent the final two chapters in UROTSUKIDOJI III, but tentacle fans the world over need not despair, since series IV is already on the way.

The UROTSUKIDOJI series often presents a problem for anime apologists. A guaranteed best-seller, it also provides plenty of fuel for the censorship lobby. UROTSUKIDOJI may be a money-spinner, but it is something that many find embarrassing, even in the industry itself. Only one Japanese actor was credited on the original production, and KISEKI have continued this tradition by keeping their own production crew anonymous.

The final two episodes of UROTSUKIDOJI III begin in the same vein as their predecessors, but seem to end with an attempt at atonements, both from the characters and their creators. There is nothing quite so disgusting as the religious orgy from III.2, several minutes of which were excised for the British release, but the sadism comes close at several points. Despite this, the plot continues to become clearer. Caesar's missile attack on Osaka is thwarted thanks to the combined efforts of Amano, Megumi and Nagumo. Meanwhile, the Makemono rebels overrun Caesar's palace, using Alecto as bait to draw the deposed dictator out of hiding. However, as the Palace falls, the combatants are enveloped in Kyo-o's "Light of Judgement", a force which turns them upon their own allies.

In the case of "Passage into the Unknown" (III.4), UROTSUKIDOJI's reputation seems almost undeserved, since at the end of all the usual sex and violence, as distasteful and puerile to this writer as ever, the final twenty minutes show considerable maturity and depth of feeling. "Passage into the Unknown" takes the series in a new direction with the maturation of the Kyo-o (literally "mad King"). Instead of an Overfiend clone, Kyo-o is revealed to be the seemingly-innocent Himi, a young girl. It is her own terror of the suffering around her which causes the Light of Judgement to fall upon the palace.

For as long as she weeps, the glittering rays envelop the surrounding area, causing all caught within their glow to lose control of the evil in their souls. The Light of Judgement works as a kind of anti-Grail, recognised only by sinners, and sparing only the pure of heart from retribution. Thus, Buju, Alecto and a few of the Makemono warriors are unaffected. Buju, who had previously been prepared to kill the infant Himi to silence her (see III.1),

has changed to such an extent that he soothes and comforts her. Unaware of the Light of Judgement, he simply wants to stop a child from crying, and shows surprising tenderness.

The Light of Judgement also revives the D-9 Genocydroid, who attempts to rescue his beloved Pedro from a Makemono gang rape, but in a vicious twist to the plot, Pedro's own sins have found her out. The Light physically fuses her with one of her attackers, dooming her even as it saves D-9, her wouldbe knight in shining armour. D-9 dispatches the rapists, some of whom are heard to beg for mercy in an ironic replay of Pedro's own cries for help. But D-9 is too late; he kills the last of her attackers only to find that Pedro has been transformed into a hideous creature. In a heart-rending scene, she begs D-9 to kill her, telling him that it is now the only way he can show his love. The scene's violent resolution happens



off-screen; it is almost as if a different director has taken over the production.

It is a shock to see Pedro, one of UROTSUKIDOJI's less sadistic characters, suffering worse at the hands of Kyo-o's justice than she did at the hands of her rapists. What is still more surprising is that while Pedro is made to suffer and die, her infinitely more culpable boss is offered redemption by the same force. Caesar remains unaffected by the Light of Judgement, as if he has already accepted his approaching death and is preparing himself for atonement. This is one of UROTSUKIDOJI's most thought-provoking and controversial suggestions, that someone as apparently evil as Caesar might be motivated out of a sense of goodness, however perverse.

Caesar's main crime seems to be the desire to dominate and control Alecto, but his motives can be understood, if not condoned. He is wracked with guilt over

Alecto Mk 1's death, for which he was partially responsible (see III.2). His obsession with keeping her prisoner is merely an expression of this guilt; however corrupt his methods, he is only trying to keep his daughter safe.

Caesar is fiercely possessive of Alecto, but in a soliloquy delivered as the palace crumbles, he cries that "... even my power cannot protect [her] from the evils of this world." Ever since his own attack on Alecto (see III.2), Caesar realises that he himself is perhaps the most dangerous of these evils, and with his dominion crumbling, he is searching for a replacement guardian for Alecto. Thus, when he challenges Buju to a duel over Alecto, he is not necessarily treating her as an inanimate object, but is rather testing Buju's mettle. By the end of the episode, Caesar appears to be full of admiration for his one-time enemy, telling Alecto "... only Buju was strong enough to take you from me."

While it can be argued that the Caesar/Buju duel with Alecto as the prize is the height of political incorrectness, this is not borne out by the outcome of the battle. Buju is victorious, but Alecto refuses to leave Caesar's side. Both father and daughter beg each other for forgiveness, Alecto for running away, and Caesar for trying to make her stay. Instead of demanding that Caesar honour his promise, Buju admits defeat and walks away.

The aftermath of the Light of Judgement is portrayed in a similarly thoughtful manner.

The camera dwells on a Human child, bringing a dying Makemono some water. The unnamed

Makemono weeps at all the bloodshed he has seen, both before and after he turned on his own kind, saying "... why did we fight

each other. Why did we fight at all?" Similar feelings are expressed by the major characters. Idaten claims that the sight of a Human in love with a Makemono is strange, to which Ruddle replies "I guess it has to be better than killing each other." The characters seem so ready to reject their violent past, and so eager to make a fresh start, it is as if they have become apologists for the past excesses of their creators. It remains to be seen how long such consideration will last into the fourth series.

"Passage into the Unknown" ends with Buju's followers heading off towards Osaka, in order for Himi to meet the Chojin and for the Makemono to discover more about their origins. The tone is surprising in its expression of levity and hope; the fighting is over, for now. The camera pans up to Amano, who muses: "Is this the ending that the actors expected?" Or even the producers, for that matter?

JONATHAN CLEMENTS



# animail

We want your input! Write to Animail -  
Anime UK Magazine - 3rd Floor - 70 Mortimer Street - London W1N 7DF - England

Dear Helen,

I am a wargamer and while searching for inspiration for painting and organising my DARK FUTURE style miniature units, I came into contact with MANGA. As a student I have been unable to afford to purchase any of the recent films but what I have seen is quite spectacular. I have my own copy of AKIRA and have seen DOMINION TANK POLICE. I have also seen some of the artwork for BUBBLE GUM CRISIS, SOL BIANCA and MACROSS. A full page of superlatives would not describe the lasting impact that MANGA has had on me. MANGA must rate alongside STAR WARS, ALIENS and PREDATOR in terms of credible storylines and realistic costumes, technology and weaponry. Where MANGA scores a double victory over other cartoons, in my opinion, is in the ability to mix the occasionally shocking, violent scenes with rock music and adult humour. In short, this is brilliant adult entertainment, but when will we see the less controversial stuff on British network Tv and maybe some of the older films available for hire?  
Andy Wylie, Stanley, Co. Durham, England

Helen : *It's a real problem for almost anyone to keep up with the recent flood of new releases from six British companies. However, there are quite a few ways of making your new hobby cheaper and more fun. You can get together with other fans and watch each other's tapes to extend the range of what you can see; you can go to conventions where old and new anime is shown; or you can find a Japanese, European or American penpal who is willing to swap material for British items (eg indie music or magazines) which are unobtainable at home. By the way, I think what you mean by MANGA is what the Japanese and many fans worldwide call ANIME - Japanese animated cartoons. MANGA is the Japanese word for COMICS, though, thanks to the widespread promotion of MANGA VIDEO releases under that name, the British mass media tend to use it as a descriptive term for all anime releases from any company.*

Dear Helen,

I felt I had to respond to some of the points raised in E. Bernhard Warg's letter in AUK 14. Firstly, yes, most of the fans I know in the UK are also surprised that MANGA VIDEO have opted for a dubbed only policy. Several of us (including myself) have written to them requesting subtitled releases, and their replies have made it clear that they are not interested in this market. As a result, most of us who are keen enough buy the USMC ver-



VIDEO GIRL AI © Masakazu Katsura/Shueisha,  
art by Steve Kyte

sions of the titles we want (at over twice the cost of MANGA VIDEO's editions). Well, if MANGA VIDEO don't want my money, I suppose that's up to them, but personally I would prefer to be supporting the UK anime industry ...

Secondly, regarding PIONEER's TENCHI MUJO release, yes it's true that the early disks did use a straight captioning system rather than the true subtitles. But this was changed on disk 3 and subsequent disks. The "subtitled" script on the later disks does not match the dubbed script. PIONEER do listen to fan input and are obviously prepared to go some way to meet fan requirements.

Concerning the display, the actual style of words you see on your screen is a function of the caption decoder. You do not HAVE to have a black letterbox around the text; this can be translucent, or a straight video background (though the latter obviously would not meet the FCC requirements). Similarly with the font style and sizes; although CC only allows two actual sizes, there is no technical reason you couldn't display the proportionally spaced "slightly fattened Helvetica font" we all know and love. The CC system is

simply a method of embedding text within a video signal. This was a brave attempt, and although as a first attempt it was a little shaky, the basic idea is sound. In other words, it's the implementation that's faulty, not the concept. PIONEER have shown that they are receptive to fan input, so let's let them know how they can improve their product.

As regards Streamline adopting the same system, well, Streamline's disks (released by Lumivision) have always been bi-lingual. But look at it this way. At the very minimum you are getting a Japanese language disk at less than two-thirds the cost of importing one from Japan.

And the final point I'd like to make is concerning AUK Video's release of KO CENTURY BEAST WARRIORS. Although I am pleased to see you get into video releases, especially with a choice of the sort of material most UK companies are not interested in, I was very disappointed to see what I assumed would be a fan-oriented label doing a dubbed-only release. Now I have no objection to anybody releasing dubbed anime, but, like E.

Bernhard Warg, I prefer to buy subtitled material, and I don't mind paying a little more for it. In other words, why not release both? Sure, I'll buy your release, and I'll urge my friends to do the same, but I'll do so to support ANIME UK, not to support dubbed anime.

NEIL MORRIS, Worthing, W. Sussex, England

Helen : *We intend to release a subbed version of our tape as soon as we can afford to do so, providing there is enough demand. However, please consider this : one reason you like Japanese-dubbed anime is because of the talent and charm of the Japanese voice actors. How are English voice actors ever to develop that level of expertise unless they try, take criticism on board, and improve? I think there is room for both Japanese-dubbed and English-dubbed material in the UK market and I hope that when you hear BEAST WARRIORS you won't think our actors have done too bad a job.*

Dear Helen,

First I want to thank you for placing my penpal request in issue no. 14. Thanks to that I've received a letter from a very nice Chinese girl. I was also surprised when I saw my name noticed by Ondes, of which I gave you the address!

I have good news. I mean REALLY good news! In the UK anime is really popular, and in The Netherlands and Belgium also! MANGA VIDEO has decided to cooperate with Poligram Video B.V., which is going to release the MANGA VIDEO movies with Dutch subtitles! And uncensored! The videos are going to be f29.95 or f39.95 (about £11.00 or £14.50) depending on the length of the movies. I pay about f45.00 (£16.50) at the moment. Polygram and MANGA VIDEO are also going to release a MANGAZINE in Dutch. And at the moment

there is a MangaMarathon in the cinemas in the Netherlands. Is this good news or what? Maybe it's nice to publish this news in your mag. ANIME UK has a lot of Dutch readers! The first 8 movies subtitled in Dutch are 1) UROTSUKI DOJI, 2) WICKED CITY, 3) FIST OF THE NORTH STAR, 4) GOLGO 13, 5) DOMINION T.P., 6) BATTLE ANGEL ALITA, 7) AKIRA and 8) GUNHED.  
RUDI REICHARDT, Breda, The Netherlands

Helen : *It's good to get feedback on the success of our pen pal column; every now and then someone tells us about the new friends they've made there and it's one of the nicest parts of our job to help fans get in touch! And it's always good to know that anime fandom is growing. The MANGA VIDEO Dutch release list to date looks aimed solely at their core market, teenage boys and older mech'n mayhem fans, but maybe in time they will also release other kinds of anime, or other companies will release product in The Netherlands and Belgium.*

Dear Helen,  
In AUK #14 Martin Chan rather forcefully voiced his opinion to which, in all fairness, he is entitled. I would like to congratulate you for standing up for your rights! You should be able to put your name to what you want, people are not forced to buy videos on the strength of your recommendations. Why should someone dictate what you think? I really enjoyed CATGIRL : NUKU-NUKU; admittedly the dubbing is a little poor in places but this did not stop my enjoyment of the film one bit. As for appealing only to a younger audience, I am 17 and at AUKcon where I first saw NUKU-NUKU I was in stitches along with people 21+ - they must have heard us in Liverpool!  
Enough opinion expressing, I have one final word in response to Justin Palmer's letter, also in AUK #14, on strange occurrences in films. In NUKU-NUKU (that film again!) when Ryun, Yoshimi and Nuku-Nuku are standing in the doorway of the beach-house, a pink fish swims past blowing bubbles, which just goes to show that animators like a good joke.  
OLIVER HAYTON, Bradford, W. Yorks., England

To Helen,  
I think it's about time I voiced my opinions on the British anime scene, and my opinion is that British fans are getting a raw deal. O.K., so there are a lot of new video labels popping up but what they are releasing is either old news or nothing special. Companies like Kiseki, Animania, Western Connection and Manga Video (YUK!) are just pumping mostly old American releases into this country and to me, this seems pathetic! Now I didn't mention Anime Projects for a reason. Nigel Fisher is part of AnimEigo and AnimEigo are a growing, mega-bucks company, so, getting rights to things like 'Goddess' before them would be quite diffi-

cult, so he's doing a good job for anime in this country. "So" you may ask "where is all this supposed to be heading?" I'll tell you. AnimEigo only got where they are today by starting off with a small, yet good release subtitled to bring production costs down, and going on from there with new and innovative releases. So why can't a British company do that? There are risks in going into any kind of business and if you're not prepared to take the risks, what's the point of going into business? You will say "Crusader did that though." What! They have done a fairly dodgy dub of NUKU-NUKU I-III and seem only to have possible plans for the next three parts in the future, quite a boring release schedule really!  
There just isn't enough variety of subs and dubs either. The British market seems to concentrate on dubs rather than subs, so British fans who say "Subs are crap!" really don't know what they are talking about because they don't get to see any over here! (Bar Anime Projects, people are too biased towards dubs already!) I admit, I was the same, and a few other people I know, but as soon as I saw VIDEO GIRL AI 1 & 2 subtitled, I was hooked on anime and subs. An ideal marketing plan would be to do what US MANGA CORPS seems to be doing and releasing everything in both subtitled and dubbed formats.  
I think that you should do an article on how to start up an anime video label business as my friend and I want to but banks etc don't want to listen to someone in their late teens and early 20s. It really would be helpful. PLEASE!!!  
MICHAEL GODDARD, Manchester, England.

Helen : *Eeeee, tha dun't know tha's born! When I were a lass we 'ad nobbut two 'Merican edits of GATCHAMAN t'go round t'entire UK anime fan population. Them were 'ard times an' no mistake ... To inject a little fact into all this : quite a few of the recent releases in this country have, in fact, been new or newish (post-1989) material and an increasing number have been subbed. Kiseki is making efforts in this direction; Western Connection specialises mostly in subs and has just commissioned subbing script translations for almost a dozen future releases. And as for banks and their attitudes, in my experience most banks will lend to anyone who comes to them with a sound proposal and sensible business plan, regardless of age! They're looking for more than passion and hot air, but age doesn't come into it unless you are legally too young to enter into a binding agreement. Indeed, there are a number of sources of funds exclusively for people in their teens and early 20s, like the Prince's Youth Business Trust. There'll be a list of local youth business agencies at your library or Citizen's Advice Bureau, so why not talk to them?*

Dear Helen,  
ANIME! A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO JAPANESE ANIMATION is a brilliant book. I really enjoyed the ANIME IN BRITAIN chapter because I learnt that shows such as ULYSSES 31 and MYSTERIOUS CITIES OF GOLD are anime, and it brought back powerful memories of these shows. I was surprised to learn that anime was available in the UK before the release of AKIRA and MANGA VIDEO's releases. I am interested in obtaining some of the older titles - WORLD OF THE TALISMAN, MAZINGER Z, CRUSHERS, ONCE UPON A TIME and ROBOTECH. If possible, could you give me addresses for the labels and any shops which may stock these vids? Or can any fans help me in obtaining them? I would love to see a feature on religion in anime, covering such titles as RAMAYANA, RG VEDA, MYSTERIOUS CITIES OF GOLD and OH! MY GODDESS!, which I think is loosely based on Norse mythology. Anyway, keep up the good work.  
SIMON RADBURN, Bristol, England

Helen: *I'm glad you enjoyed the book. As many people don't realise, anime was available in this country on video and tv for years before AKIRA came along. The problem then was that nobody except the fans believed anime was suitable for anyone but children; the problem now is that, thanks to a huge promotional campaign and the hysteria generated in Parliament and the Press, very few people believe children should be allowed anywhere near it! Still, everything changes, and we'll keep trying to help create a more balanced, informed attitude. Unfortunately though, I can't help you on finding some of these early releases as the labels are mostly now defunct and the releases were made way back in the mid-80s; very few video shops will have kept titles in stock for so long. You might find some at swapmeets or carboots, or other fans might help. MANGA VIDEO may release CRUSHERS at some point in the future, and ROBOTECH is being released by KISEKI; incidentally KISEKI are also releasing the classic SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO in its American version, known to fans as STAR BLAZERS.*

Konnichiwa McCarthy-san,  
I was watching SKY ONE and this cartoon came on which looked like it was Japanese animation. Please could you tell me if it is or not? It was called KIMBA THE WHITE LION and it was really good. Thank you very much.  
DAVID CURTIS, Uckfield, E. Sussex, England.

Helen : *Yes, KIMBA THE WHITE LION is a Japanese tv show; it was made by the great Tezuka Osamu, and originally called JUNGLE TAITEI (JUNGLE EMPEROR), but dubbed for American TV and retitled KIMBA THE WHITE LION. It's an old show now, over 20 years old, but it still has many wonderful qualities; the stories are very good and the animation and character design has great charm. KIMBA was shown on American TV in the*

1970s, and many people feel that Disney's new release *THE LION KING* was based on it, although Disney claim their story is completely original.

Dear Helen,

Did you know that there are German TV channels (RTL2 and Kabelkanal) showing anime-series? It's mostly sports-series or series for a younger audience but almost all of them have a very good German dubbing and they often leave the original Japanese names of the characters.

They recently had OHAYO SPANK, HIKARI NO DENSETSU (here they left the songs of Natsukawa and Mr. D. in Japanese - it was great!), AISHITE KNIGHT, ROBIN HOOD, THE TREASURE ISLAND (TMS), GEORGIE, SENNEN JOO, MIYUKI, GANBARRE KICKERS, CAPTAIN FUTURE and "MILA SUPERSTAR" (I don't know the original name, it's about an all-girl volleyball team). At the moment they have THE URASHIMAN, LITTLE WOMEN and JUNGLE TAITEI.

HELLA KROEGER, Neunkirchen, Germany

Helen : Even if it is mostly sports and childrens' series, a lot of British fans are going to be very jealous of the amount of anime on German tv!

Dear Helen and ANIME UK slaves, I mean staff,

First off I'd like to congratulate you on what is obviously the best English language anime magazine. Now on to other matters. I'm tired of the Sub/Dub debate. It's getting really stupid and really boring. I like subtitles and can't stand dubs. So what? That doesn't mean anything. I have the solution to the whole Sub/Dub debate ... you watch what you like and let others do the same (watch what they like, not what you like - this side note for all those over-literal readers or smart@\$\$e\$ out there.) There, problem solved. where's my Nobel Peace Prize?

Chris McNatt, Philadelphia, PA, USA.

Dear Helen,

Do you know what gets on my nerves? I'm talking about the cliffhanger! I don't hold anything against the good oldfashioned suspense ending on videos such as THE GUYVER; however, the series 3 x 3 EYES was nothing short of excellent right to the end of part 2 and by then I was a Manga addict. One year has passed and if MANGA VIDEO don't bring out part 3 then I'm going to curl up and die. It's possibly one of the best anime I've seen but I fear it won't continue because it's sort of a habit of theirs (MV) now. The same thing has happened to the titles DANGAIOH and RG VEDA. Rumour has it that RG VEDA Part 2 is coming out but for both of these videos the film just stopped as everything was in full swing. Are any of these three titles going to continue soon? If not then tell MANGA ENTERTAINMENT to end their films properly.

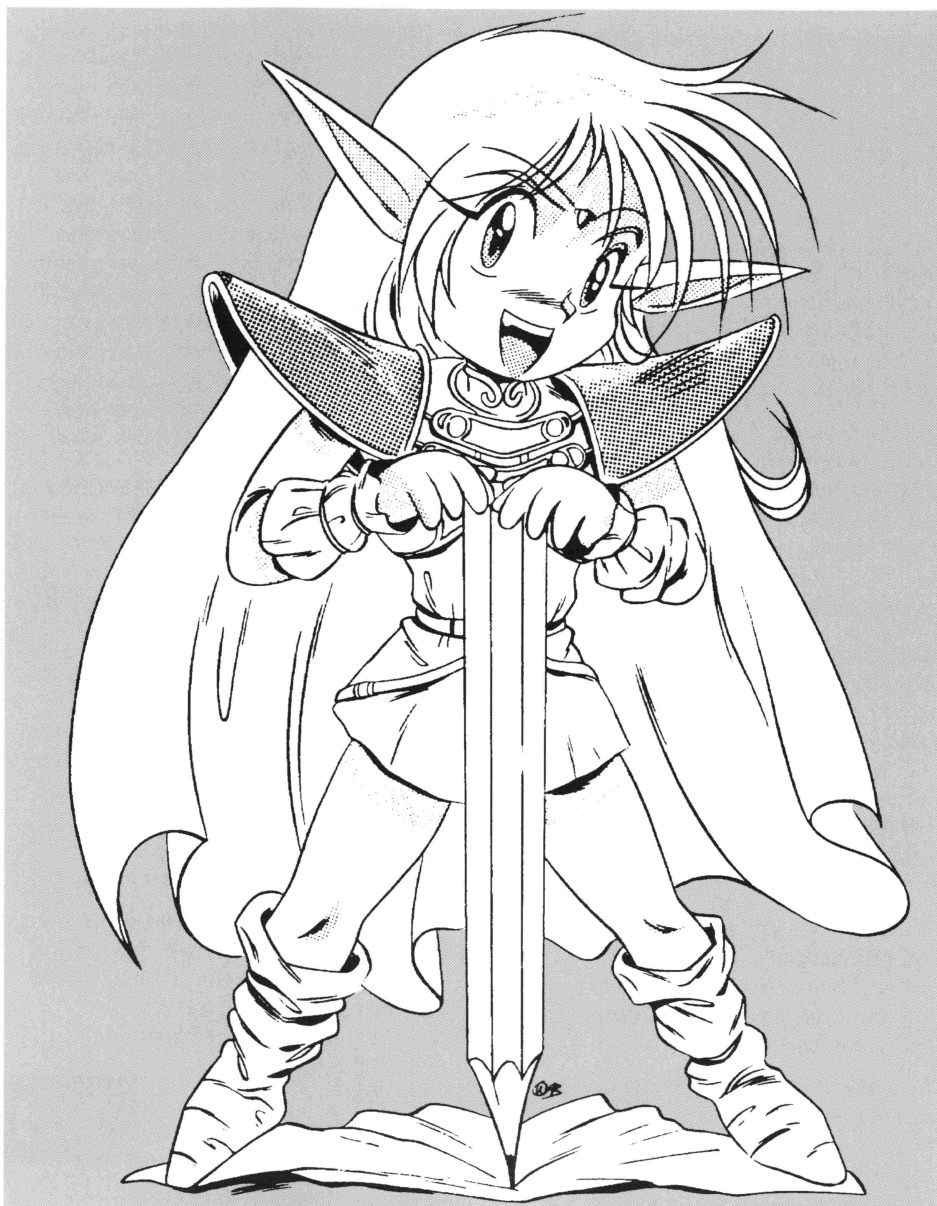
MARTIN HOPLEY, Reading, England

Helen : You are taking MANGA VIDEO to task unfairly over "cliffhanger endings". Remember, they don't actually make the films, they just buy the rights from the Japanese owners. They can't release what doesn't exist, nor add extra footage or new endings to the material they buy. RG VEDA 2 has only recently been completed and there are no more 3 x 3 EYES OAVs, but that's not MANGA VIDEO's fault. It's not fair to say "tell MANGA ENTERTAINMENT to end their films properly" because 3 x 3 EYES, RG VEDA, DANGAIOH and the rest aren't "their films" in the sense that you mean. There's really nothing they can do in these cases!

The anime and manga industries in Japan work very closely together, and Japanese creators often work extensively in both industries and are involved in every aspect of their creations. They may start a story in manga form, ie as a comic strip. The if the story is popular it may be animated, either in whole or in part. Sometimes the anime version just covers a part of the story told in the manga;

sometimes it's a prequel or a sequel. But very often the anime doesn't cover the whole story.

Japanese fans can get lots more information from manga, dramadisks (like radio plays on CD), novels and so on, and can follow the development of their favourite characters for years. The hugely popular LEGEND OF GALACTIC HEROES OAV series and movie are based on a ten-novel science fiction epic and so far only tell a part of that huge story. RECORD OF LODOSS WAR is a 13-episode OAV series set in a world created for a role-playing game and backed up by eight novels as well as all the published RPG material, artwork and CDs. Those 13 episodes tell only a fraction of the tales set in the world of Lodoss and show only a very few of its people. MANGA ENTERTAINMENT would need to buy and publish the whole of the 3 x 3 EYES manga in translation to give you the rest of its story, since it doesn't exist on video! So don't blame them for what they can't help.



RECORD OF LODOSS WAR © Group SNE/ Kadokawa/ Mizuno.  
art by Wil Overton

**Seyler Laurent**

Grand Duchy of Luxembourg :

It now seems that British Animefandom is about to enter the second of the 'OldHat-& Never-Ending' debates (after the 'sub-vs-dub' debates anyway), namely : Violence in Anime.

On mainland Europe, anime was known only through TV, and TV programmers 'adapted' and cut (and still do!) according to what they believe the general audience (kids AND adults) are mature enough to see. On the other hand, anime in the U.S. and U.K. is mostly known through the video market. Censorships like the B.B.F.C. permit (British companies) to release features that without certain certificates could not be released (at least that's how it's supposed to work ...). But as anime is still a "foreign" artefact, censors don't really know what to do with it, so they probably fear to underrate them, and so prefer to force the company releasing them to cut them to pieces.

In Japan, there is a distinctive border between 'Live' shows and anime. In fact, the live shows are under constant pressure from the censor boards, while anime, because it is so 'unreal' (ie characters bleed and die, but only on painted cels) is not. Here, as a cultural difference, we don't make that distinction. Every medium is considered to be able to 'corrupt' the minds of those not mature enough to understand it. Moreover, the general public still speak of 'cartoons', not of 'anime'. As it would probably be too difficult to change our 'cultural' way of thinking, we should (at least) as much as possible try to avoid clashes with it.

Everybody knows that sex and violence sell, and therefore, most of the earlier releases were aimed towards those genres (or at least, were aimed towards the action-genre). It's just that, after having caught the public's attention, most of the companies targetted a larger audience with 'softer' features.

Manga Video has already gained its public. In fact, ANIME has already gained its public. So why do a lot of newcomers still go for the 'Gore & Guts' movies? Doing so will not necessarily convince potential customers, but will certainly convince anti-animeists that they're right; that anime is violent, redundant and definitively NOT for kids (or a mass-market audience).

Anime can, and should, tell every story, every phantasy, as long as it isn't made to hurt anybody. (I have for example never seen any fascist or racist anime, and DO hope that there aren't any!)

The video companies seem to be receptive to any fan input, so it should be up to you Otakus to decide if you want anime to stay a fannish sub-culture, or to become a mass phenomenon. If you don't know enough about general-audience anime, ask your friends, write to fanclubs in France, Italy,

Belgium or Germany. They can and probably will be ready to give you information about what ran on their TV networks. If some of you can read Japanese (or have a good dictionary) then go for NewType's ANIMESOFT KANZEN CATALOGUE, published by Kadokawa Shoten, price Y2.800. You can also simply write to your fave videocompany, they may already have licensed a good family (no offense!) show, but wanted to release it later.

If you want to do this, then DO IT FAST! 'Cause if the BBFC has not enough sense of humour to enjoy GALACTIC PIRATES' Saturday-Night-Live speak, pace & pattern, the future of anime may look bleak from a censorship point of view ...

**Sean Walters**

Warwickshire, England

I no longer buy Manga Video's videos. To be honest, Manga Video (MV) frightens me. The company is now so huge and so powerful; let me give you an idea.

As has been said, MV sells about 15,000 copies of each of its titles. That's a lot of sales when they're releasing perhaps four titles a month. And that means there's also a staggering amount of money made for a mere anime video company. But not just this; now the Manga Club has a fee of £10 a year. With about 25,000 members (and more joining all the time) this means another enormous number on the balance sheet. This is a powerful position to be in. More money means more advertising. More advertising, more sales, and more sales, more money ... A cycle that would be hard to break now. And with financial affluence comes influence.

How many shops do you go into to buy anime, and see all the anime collected together under the classification "Manga Videos"? (More advertising.) This is wrong. But no-one seems to realise or do anything about it.

Please don't misunderstand me - MV is a good thing for anime in Britain. Thanks to them we have a healthy, growing market for this great medium. Lots of people now know about anime and plenty buy it. Or should I say lots of people now know about "those Manga Videos, they're those violent cartoons, ain't they?" and they buy them.

But thanks to MV there are alternative anime companies I can buy my anime from instead. And I do, purely for artistic reasons; I prefer subtitles, no editing and the original titles. Were MV to advance into this market, I'd buy their videos.

But I would still be scared. Now MV (or their parent, Manga Entertainment ME) owns MANGA MANIA (MM). Most people who read it buy anime. MM say that there's been "no pressure to alter their editorial stance".

And this is shown to be correct in their reviews - there's no bias there.

The rest of the magazine then? In the past there's been occasional articles on the video companies' products - it's only natural, after all. But now? the first issue of ME control and the front cover features one of MV's titles. But it doesn't stop there. Take a look at issue 14. On the front cover is STREET FIGHTER II, plus an article inside. Who's publishing the STREET FIGHTER II manga in this country in the near future? There's an article on THE GUYVER - which company is currently releasing the OAVs? And an article on CLAMP. So any guesses as to who's releasing a CLAMP production? And it continues! The two instalments of HELLHOUNDS (not complete in themselves) are nothing more than two very long adverts for the upcoming 'Manga Books'.

So much for "no pressure". And, of course, it's all more money for ME.

Believe me, MV/ME is big.

I think they've abused the position they've deservedly earned. They've exploited certain genres to a ridiculous extent, going so far as to suggest that some titles fall into the 'sex and gore' category when they quite simply don't, only to sell videos. I don't have any answers (and some people don't believe there are any problems.)

But I do think it's too late. MV has already decided which road it's going to follow and nothing said by little us, the core of fandom at the heart of the matter, is going to make any difference, as long as MV sell videos.

So sit back, relax and buy whichever anime you enjoy, and remember, it's all thanks to MV that you can.

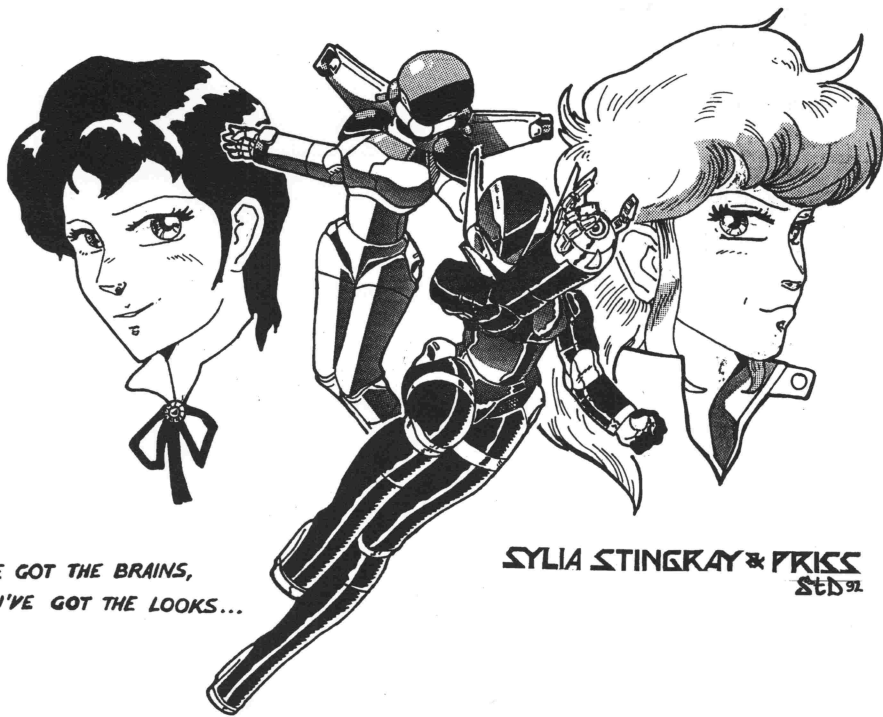
**Gregory A. Wallin**

Minneapolis, USA:

This Soapbox thing you have going has promise, and I would like to add to Mr. Cook's words by saying that, if MANGA VIDEO is run intelligently, they would remember the two 'rules' of good business ...

1. Always try to make money.
2. Never sell out your customers ... that is where your money comes from.





I'VE GOT THE BRAINS,  
YOU'VE GOT THE LOOKS...

SYLIA STINGRAY & PRISS  
STB 92

## FANSCENE ROUNDUP

**ANIMINATION** is a new fanzine edited by Stephen Thomas. The preview copy looks promising despite rather misty picture reproduction which somewhat negates the crisp layout. Reviews, opinion, interviews, features; new issue out 1st Oct, price £1.60. ANIMINATION, 48 Gwaunmiskin Rd., Beddau, Pontypridd, Mid Glamorgan, South Wales, CF38 2AU.

**KAMIGA CLUB** has been mentioned in these columns before but good things bear repeating. The friendly, informative trilingual club is devoted to "anime, manga and Japanese culture" and produces publications in English, French and Dutch packed with information and ideas without being "heavy" or hard to follow. Serious information in an enjoyable format is the aim of all the club's publications. I really can't praise the club's approach and style too highly; everything they send me is full of really useful articles and features, and they also offer all the usual club services like pen pals, contacts and so on. To get more information send a self-addressed envelope with either Belgian stamps or two IRCs to THE KAMIGA, c/o Charles Focant, 132 Ave Ed. Leburton, 4300 Waremmé, Belgium.

**MINAMI ANIME** is a new anime club based in the UK which welcomes overseas members as well. Founded by Mark Cleaver and Neil Hansford, it focusses on "the softer, more CUTE type of anime - that's why our club slogan is "The Club With Added Kawaii". Video showings, tape library service, newsletter and more are on offer and participation is welcomed - in fact a couple more fans are

needed to join the (strictly non-profit) Club's committee. If you're interested write to MINAMI ANIME c/o Mark Cleaver, 15 New Road, Fair Oak, Nr. Eastleigh, Hants SO5 7EN, or c/o Neil Hansford, 22 Lime Grove, Paulsgrove, Portsmouth, Hants., PO6 4DG.

And ANOTHER new anime club; Chris McNatt writes "...some fellow fans and I are starting up an anime/manga fan club with pen pal service, buying discounts (hopefully), an APA and a newsletter including but not limited to RPGs, video games, trades, more stupid debates, models (the little plastic ones), world domination, convention calendars, contests and other good junk. All races, religions, ages, sexes, social classes, and yes, even you dub people are welcome!" Write enclosing SASE (or IRCs if you live outside the States) to Chris McNatt, 4943 Gransback St., Philadelphia, PA 19120, U.S.A.

**SF3D ENTHUSIASTS TAKE NOTE** - fan FRANK SAVINO is putting together a translation of the HOBBY JAPAN SF3D special and other printed material, and would like to contact other SF3D enthusiasts to expand his own knowledge and share ideas. Contact him at 1917 Rodney Drive, Suite 309, Los Angeles, CA 90027, USA.

**AND ON THE FANZINE SCENE** - a new idea, a letterzine to debate topics of fan interest (a bit like our own ANIME SOAPBOX!) is **ANIME DEBATER**. An ssae/IRC to editor RALPH CHILTON, 4 Queen's Court, Bayview Rd. South, Aberdeen, AB1 6YZ, Scotland, will get you more information.

**JAMES TAYLOR**, 95 Waverley Road, Harrow, HA2 9RO, UK; fanzine editor (BRITISH MANGA), manga & Takahashi fan; particularly wants Japanese penpals.  
**RICARDO ESTEBAN PARRO**, c/Olimpiada 3, 3 F, 28923 - Alcorcon (Madrid), SPAIN; 'Dear friends, I want to meet English manga and anime fans and exchange all about manganime world, because I'm working in a fanzine. Thanks!'

**BILLY MAN**, 47 West St. Helens Street, Abingdon, Oxon., OX14 5BT, UK; wants to contact other fans in the UK and round the world for swaps, information etc.. big fan of HERE IS GREENWOOD.  
**ARIANNA DATTERO**, L.60 Damiano Chiesa 45, Torino 10156, Italy; Italian girl seeking friends around the world, "I love RECORD OF LODOSS WAR, WEATHERING CONTINENT, SHURATO, SAINT SEIYA, SAMURAI TROOPERS, SILENT MOBIUS, PATLABOR ... we can exchange material because I have many art-books, CDs etc. Please, please write me soon! I answer every letter!"

**CHRIS ROLLASON**, 17 The Woodlands, Linton, Cambs., CB1 6UF, England : aged 16, loves anime, other interests punk, industrial metal, Pulp (the band). Fave anime AKIRA, RIDING BEAN, NAU-SICAA. "Looking for punky female penpals who are also into anime and like Nine Inch Nails, aged around 15-25. Anyone interested, please write!"

**SAM H. MCHOMBO**, 1618 Bayo Vista Ave., San Pablo, CA 94806, U.S.A.; age 21, fave anime includes CAPTAIN HARLOCK, GUNDAM, MACROSS, interests include learning Japanese and studying Japanese culture. "I hope to hear a favorable response. Thank you!"

**SCOTT ADCOCK**, 36 North Park Rd., Erdington, Birmingham, B23 7YD, England; "I'm 16 and into anything Japanese, also Hong Kong Movies & Super Famicom. Fave anime BLACK MAGIC M-66, fave manga LUM, RANMA. Anybody anywhere write and I will reply."

**CHRIS JACKMAN**, 3 Albion Terrace, Lexham Road, Litcham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE32 2OQ, England; male, 23, "seeking anime friends who love FABULOUS BATTLE WINDARIA/ONCE UPON A TIME to share information on the voice actors, discuss the plots of the Japanese and dubbed versions. Anyone have an INTERSOUND INC., PRODUCTIONS filmography?"

**JOHN HEATON**, 4 Whitchurch House, Cheddington Grove, Allerton, Bradford, W. Yorkshire, England; seeking penpals worldwide to swap information on all types of anime, manga & soundtracks. "An answer to all letters is guaranteed 100%!"

# PEN PALS

**ANIME HONG KONG STYLE -  
IN LONDON**

GE MAN wrote to tell us about some of the terrific anime and manga shops in London's Chinatown. Here you can get anime videos both new and secondhand, some dubbed into Chinese and some in Japanese with Chinese subtitles; magazines including FAMILY COMIC and A-CLUB; and anime merchandise such as badges, banners, bookmarks, stationery and keyrings. Stock changes constantly and it helps a lot if you can find out the Chinese titles of the shows you are interested in, as many of the staff in Chinatown's shops don't speak much English, let alone Japanese! Failing a Chinese title a picture of the cover or lead charas might help. Most of the shops don't do mail order but telephone and ask

**RETAIL  
ROUNDUP**

them first - you may be lucky.

The nearest Tube stations to Chinatown are Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus and Tottenham Court Road. Head for Shaftesbury Avenue and you will find Gerrard Street and the Chinese gates just off the main road. Most shops are open 10 or 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and many open on Sunday.

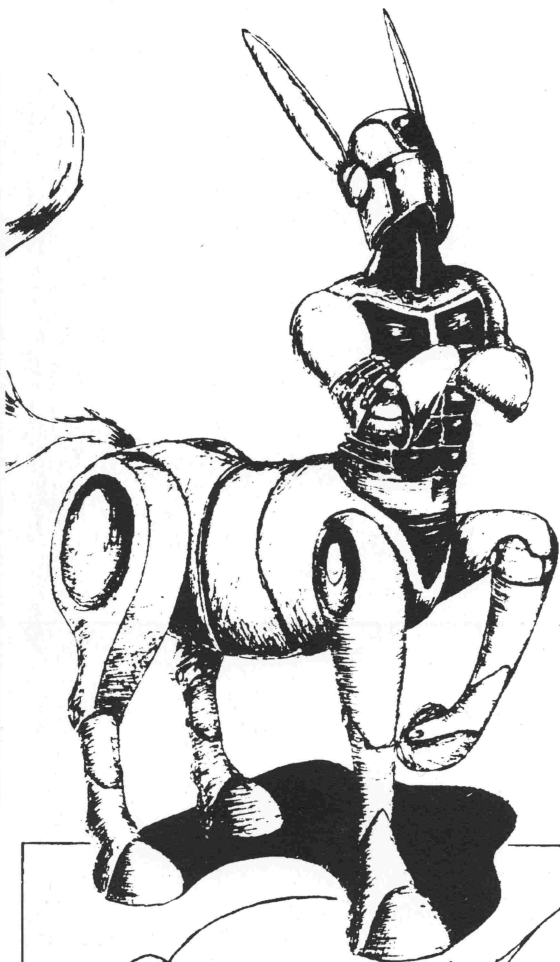
The main shops to visit are listed below, but any supermarket or general store may have small items of merchandise in stock, so look everywhere!

CANNON & CO	071 437 7157
SINGALONG & CO	071 437 8789
JENSEN TRADING CO	071 734 5939
SOUNDS OF CHINA	071 734 1970

**BINBO CLUB** supplies CDs, video games, posters, t-shirts, idol cards and other anime/Japanese goodies. Send 2 IRCs and an sae to BINBO CLUB attn JINGOBEI, 2245 E. Colorado Suite 104 #193, Pasadena, CA 91107. Clubs, conventions, BINBO CLUB wants to advertise with you, so write!

EYECATCH/RETAIL

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▲ by Oliver Hayton (w. Yorks)

◀ by Russel Elder (Paisley)

▷ by ? (Unsigned)

▽ by Simon Rush (S.Harrow)



**anime  
EYECATCH**

**INGREDIENTS**

- 3 oz. DIGESTIVE BISCUITS
- 1 oz. BUTTER (MELTED)
- 8 oz. PINK AND WHITE MARSHMALLOWS
- 4 oz. MILK CHOCOLATE HUNDREDS & THOUSANDS (SUGAR STRANDS)

**あ おいしい**

\*: A Oishii = Ah Delicious

**MOMO'S MINKY MALLO PIE**

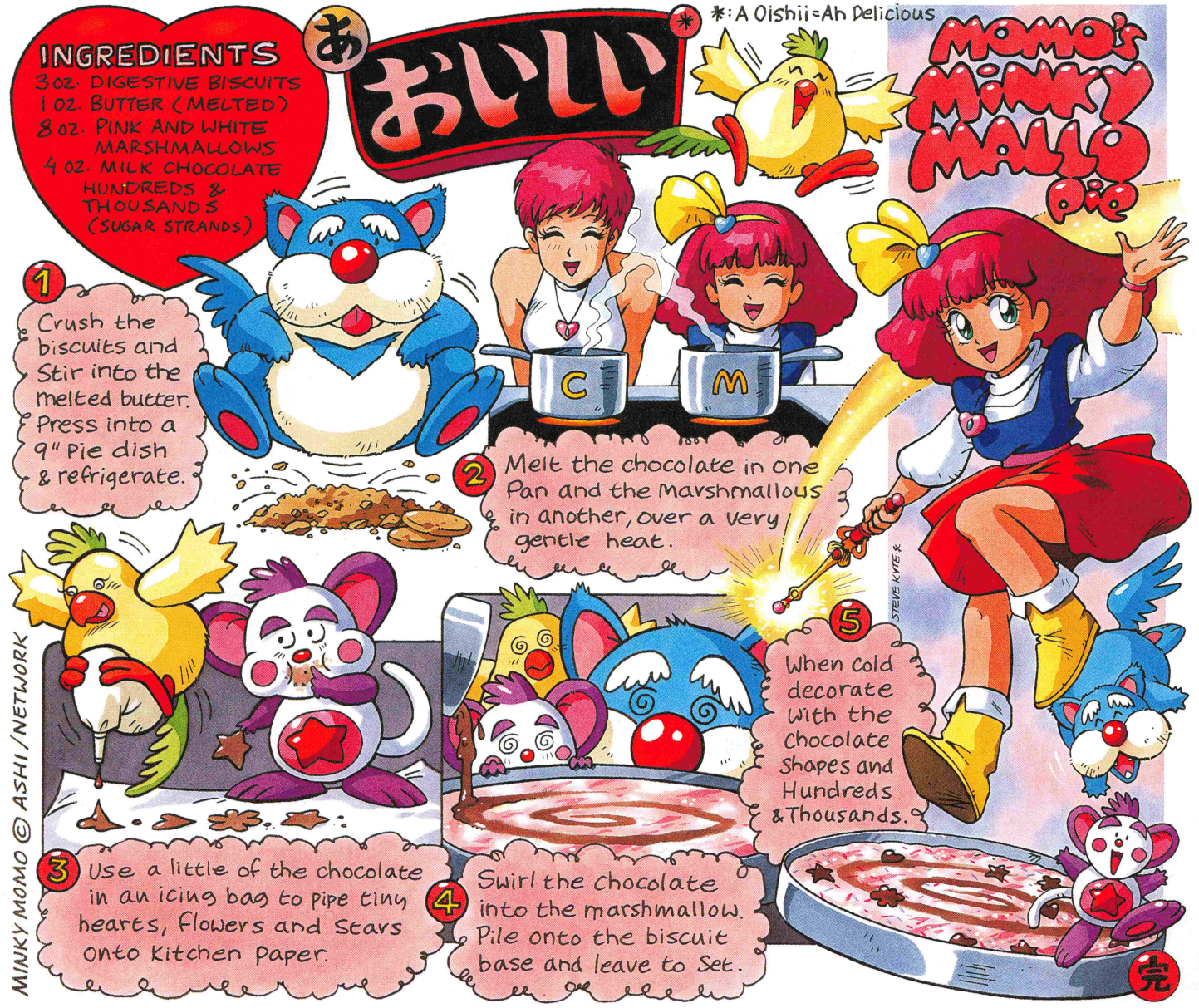
**1** Crush the biscuits and Stir into the melted butter. Press into a 9" pie dish & refrigerate.

**2** Melt the chocolate in one Pan and the Marshmallows in another, over a very gentle heat.

**3** Use a little of the chocolate in an icing bag to pipe tiny hearts, flowers and stars onto kitchen paper.

**4** Swirl the chocolate into the marshmallow. Pile onto the biscuit base and leave to set.

**5** When cold decorate with the chocolate shapes and Hundreds & Thousands.



MINKY MOMO © ASHI/NETWORK

STEVE KYTE &

ネクスト イッシュュー →  
(NEXT ISSUE)

**アニメ UK**  
MAGAZINE

OUTZONE

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**MORE COLOUR!**  
**ARRESTING WOMEN**  
**MORE PAGES!**

• ON SALE • 1st DECEMBER 1994

**ANIME GALLERY**

TAIHO! SCHICHAUZO

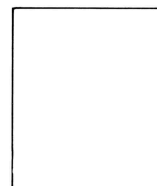
Previewing next issue's Sakura Studio special report, here to whet your appetite is a picture from Fujishima Kosuke's hit Taiho! Schichauzo (You're Under Arrest!). No Goddesses, just Gorgeous Cops...





# ANIME UK

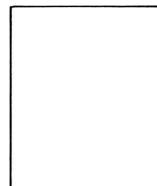
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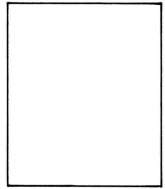
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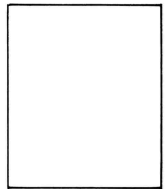
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